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ON HAVING IN MIND

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SIR DAVID ROSS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I have chosen as the topic of this inaugural lecture that of "having in mind," the manner or manners in which things come before us in consciousness, are present to our thoughts, or are in some way "there for us." Alternatively, I might say that I want to consider whatever may be involved in saying that we can turn our thoughts in this or that direction, that we can let them dwell on this or that actuality or possibility, whether what we thus concern ourselves with be picked out from our present environment, or reached for beyond it. I like this second "active" way of describing my subject-matter much less than my first, impersonal way of speaking, for reasons that I shall try to make plain in the course of this lecture. I wish, in short, to give you a tentative anatomy of our conscious life, and to sketch the fundamental dimensions into which it may be differentiated. This task is important, since the puzzles which concern the presence of objects to our minds are of a peculiarly deep-seated and refractory sort: they are also puzzles which infect our treatment of practically all other philosophical questions. It is not that certain arbitrarily chosen ways of speaking confuse us, which could be readily bettered by keeping our eyes on the facts: it is rather as if our subject-matter itself confused us, and tempted us to describe it in ways which only serve to deepen mystery and perplexity, and which ultimately plunge us into nonsense. We certainly want to say that we are able, in the span of an instant and with the mere shade of a nod, to turn our thought in the most various directions, to things near and remote, existent or non-existent, possible or impossible,

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and this without more than the most tenuous supports and signposts, which throw no light whatever on so large an undertaking. And though such proceedings are familiar, they do not readily lose their marvellous quality: we find it hard to see how something so fleeting and formless as a thought, whose very existence can so readily be brought into question, can none the less bring before us objects so diverse and so widely scattered, so concrete and so ponderous, and so wholly unlike itself. I know that these things no longer puzzle certain younger philosophers, who have had but a brief training in linguistic therapeutics: I can only say that I, who have been subjected to a fairly long course of such therapy, still feel occasional awe before my own subjective activity, much as Kant felt towards the starry heavens above him or the moral law within. If we are not here in face of the transcendent, of something which eludes all ordered speaking, and can be dealt with only by remotion or analogy, we are undoubtedly up against a transcendental illusion, a deceit rigged and sustained by certain abiding factors in our personal situation, and yielding only to purges much more drastic than any hitherto devised. Such purges I believe to be necessary, but I do not think them at all easily come by, nor readily applied. I wish also to deal with our conscious minding of objects because it has been the main theme of a great modern philosophical tradition, the intentionalist doctrine of the mind, which was put forward by Brentano, Meinong and Husserl. It is a tradition by which I myself have been deeply influenced: I find in it a great deal of hard-headed loyal clinging to the appearances themselves, as opposed to what we, in our simplifying zeal, might like them to be, and I should be sorry if all that has been so patiently built up should now be merely forgotten. I do not wish this evening to put forward any very new and revolutionary insights: I shall be content if I can disengage certain useful ways of thinking and speaking from the accretions which have overlaid them, if I can set them forth in their fundamental simplicity, and if I can thereby enable them to stand up to the dizzying onslaughts of new and brilliant emphases.

The questions we are about to consider are of course philosophical questions: they are deep questions as to the *nature* of commonplace objects, or as to "what may be involved" in common matters of fact. They are not ordinary surface questions calling for the discovery of new and unfamiliar facts. It is an important modern insight that we must always deal with such deep questions of philosophy by a method of linguistic recommendation. Whatever we may think or say, we raise such questions because we are dissatisfied with the accepted ways in which we speak about the familiar facts of experience: we feel perhaps that there are resemblances they fail to bring out, distinctions that they fail to draw, complexities that

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they slur over or that they wantonly introduce, vaguenesses they permit, or conflicts that they fail to rule out. We want to see things less ambiguously, or at least rather differently aligned and emphasized, and we cannot rest until we have built up a new way of speaking about these familiar facts that is more to our taste. In putting forward what we call a true analysis of those facts we are also adopting, and recommending to others, a new way of speaking about them. It is plain, for instance, in the particular case under consideration, that we are not in quest of factual discoveries about our mental life, but that we rather want to see our way through the tangle of stretched, twisted, transferred, indefinite, paradoxical, merely pictorial expressions that seem so hopelessly characteristic of our talk about the mind. It has, however, been held, that while one can very well pronounce upon the truth or falsehood of statements made in some novel philosophical idiom, once its rules have been made plain, one can in no way pronounce upon the truth or falsehood of that idiom itself, nor compare it, as regards truth or falsity, with alternative ways of speaking. It has also been held by many that it makes no sense at all to inquire whether our reasons for adopting a given form of philosophical diction are sound reasons or unsound ones, and whether we are justified or the reverse in speaking as we do. It has also been held that, since we can talk sense, and can communicate such sense to others, by making use of ordinary expressions in the ordinary manner, and since we might very well fail to do so were we to venture on new and untried ways of speaking, there can never be a philosophical motive so compelling as to justify any wide departure from ordinary diction.

All these seem to me to be contentions which retain their persuasive force only when they are insinuated rather than stated. For while it is clear that the aims guiding us in our philosophical researches are by no means simple and harmonious, they may none the less be said to constitute a family of purposes with enough connection and affinity to be set aside from other similar families, and to be marked off, as they are in fact marked off, with a name of their own. They also form a body of aims sufficiently unified and compact for us to say that a given philosophical account will satisfy them all more fully than an alternative account, and that it is in consequence sounder and more justified. And since the aims in question all have reference to objective differences and affinities which it is the function of philosophical speech to uncover, there is sense in saying, provided we realize just what we are saying, that one mode of speaking may be truer than another. The word "true," like the words "reasonable," "valid," "justifiable," "good" and so forth, is used in a large number of different but related senses: it has one application to statements of particular fact, another in connection with statements of law,

quite another in relation to probabilities, in relation to values, and in relation to logical and mathematical necessities. The truth is always what we aim at, and what we tend towards by applying certain definite techniques of investigation: the term of our endeavours may, however, be different in each case. There can therefore be little harm, and may very well be profound profit, in saying that we are trying to arrive at the truth about the mind, or about having in mind: it's quite as honest, and not a bit more misleading, than to say, with deprecating mock-modesty, that we are merely making recommendations as to how such matters should be spoken of. And as to the further contention that accounts differing widely from those of ordinary language will necessarily prove inferior to the latter, this surely is a matter for careful experimentation, not at all for a *a priori* pronouncement.

Now, however, we must propose a limitation to the whole treatment of our subject. We are not going to consider the presence of objects to our minds from any and every angle, but solely from an "inward" or subjective point of view. We shall try to say what this having in mind may amount to in terms of actual *experience*, in the way things seem and feel to us, and not how it may be displayed in what we physically do or undergo. We take up this subjective approach both because it has been the traditional approach of philosophers, and also because it remains much harder, and philosophically more rewarding, than any other: we also adopt it because it may be somewhat neglected in the future. We do not maintain that the approach in question has any special priority, whether epistemological or logical, or from the point of view of causal explanation. Much less do we maintain that we are here dealing with some special and unique subject-matter. It requires little examination of ordinary diction to note that the terms used to sketch the intelligent purposive life of the mind are all used to cover *both* what we outwardly and objectively do, and also how things inwardly seem and feel to us. The one word "purpose" which covers such subjective phases as the experiences of silent planning, the click of resolution with its consciousness of action, and the felt pressure of volitional effort, also covers such objective phases as the steady drift of our acts, despite variation of circumstance, towards identical consummations, the steady abandonment of lines of action which either do not lead to such consummations, or which lead to them cumbrously and circuitously, the reinforcement of conduct which leads to such results more easily, and so on. In like manner such words as "believing," "remembering," "supposing" and so forth, all cover countless possible trains of feeling and ideal appearance, as well as countless modifications of speech and action to fit varying things and circumstances. And if it is possible to feel explosively, or tenderly, or tensely,

or dumbfoundedly in the face of some object, it is no less possible to act in a manner towards it to which such adverbs seem appropriate. There is no reason at all why we should here depart from ordinary language. We need not even say, as I myself liked to say in the past, that the terms of our psychological vocabulary are all systematically ambiguous, and that they stand *equivocally* for features of our public actions as well as for aspects of feeling and idea. For all words, whether we call them equivocal or univocal, cover families of phenomena: there can be no point in saying that they do so equivocally unless we can point to some deep disparity, or to some lack of connection, among the varying matters that they cover. There is no such disparity in the case before us. There is nothing, in fact, more impressive in nature than the profound dovetailing between what we may call the outward and inward components of our psychological attitudes: how one rides on the back of the other, how one subtly leads up to and continues the theme of the other, how sometimes there is not merely sequence or concomitance between them, but profound descriptive likeness or identity. The hesitant planning of some action in one's head leads on to the smooth unconscious execution in which its theme may be said to be continued: it is also not at all unlike certain forms of bungling practical experimentation which end up in the same outcome. In some cases, indeed, it is only by an artificial abstraction that one can take apart the outward and inward aspects of a certain proceeding: to dance, to write, to sing, to embrace are at once actions and experiences, they are felt and enjoyed as much as they are physically performed, they may be said to take place indifferently in our muscles or our minds.

If we thus refuse to bifurcate the meaning of our psychological terms into two separate senses, we must refuse, *a fortiori*, to admit any special priority in the application of such terms to features of experience. Quite obviously there is no such priority. It was necessary, as well as a matter of mere history, that we should have learnt the application of such terms to forms and trends of action, before ever we learnt to apply them to features of experience. Nor have we any reason at all for saying that the experimental components of an attitude must have an invariable explanatory priority over its active aspects. There are as many cases where the realization of an attitude in action precedes its realization in experience as where the reverse is the case: there is no performance so flexible or so finely self-critical which may not as readily drop from us without prior reflection, as emerge as the final, painful fruit of troubled broodings. But, when all this has been conceded, it still remains profitable to treat our psychological attitudes from these two distinct traditional points of view. For an attitude that may be poorly developed, featureless, largely dispositional and of doubtful inter-

pretation from an outward, neutral standpoint, may be richly diversified, highly concrete and of very clear interpretation from a subjective point of view: the reverse may as frequently also be the case. The distinction between the objects of our concern and the mode in which we are concerned with them, is also, in general, much clearer from the subjective point of view: what is, in the one case, a matter for direct pronouncement, is, for the most part, in the other case, a matter for uncertain inference. The alignment of our attitudes will also be different from the two standpoints: there is a world of objective difference between hallucinations and veridical perceptions, while subjectively they may be indistinguishable. All this being assumed, we have as much obligation to take full analytic account of the way things seem and feel to us, as of our manner of acting in regard to them. And we shall have to practise the same rounding off of the fragmentary actuality with the supplementing disposition in the former case, that has been found so profitable in the latter.

We may at this point briefly glance at three modern theses which bear as destructively on our whole enterprise, as did the theses of the Sophist Gorgias on the Eleatic philosophy. The first is that there are *no* sides to man other than what he publicly does or tends to do, the second, that if there were such sides, they would be strictly undiscoverable, the third, that if there were any discovery of such sides, it would be strictly incommunicable. None of these theses merits great attention: all rest on a thoroughly confused application of the obscure, shifting distinction between what is public and what is private. We all live in a physical order which is public in the sense of being there "for all to see": it is what we dig down to after everything in our experience that alters largely, sharply, arbitrarily and with apparent lawlessness, has been filtered off as due to the interfering influence of our own condition, position, attitude, instruments, environment or route of approach. It is also something that shows itself with ever greater adequacy the longer we make use of the deliverances of different experiences to supplement and check each other, and which accordingly spills over into what *could* have been or *might* have been experienced, as much as into what actually was so. In this public order everything enjoys its definite position, magnitude, duration, temperature and so on, determined by whatever techniques yield us the firmest and least shifting results, and standing opposed to—though it may also be stretched to embrace and explain—the varied ways in which its contents might show themselves to persons variously situated, and in different inward moods and conditions. As against such invariancy, the varied ways in which things are brought home to experiencers variously situated, are reasonably spoken of as

"private," since they are *not* there for all to feel and see, *whatever* their position or condition. But it is wantonly mistaken to treat whatever is private in *this* sense as something in essence inaccessible to more than a single observer or experient, or as indescribable in terms intelligible to more than a single speaker or listener, and hence as lying beyond the ordered edifice of knowledge, and the real world it interprets. For it is not hard, in any ordinary sense of the word "show," to show a man what things look like to persons variously situated or subject to peculiar influences: one has but to put him in the right position, or subject him to the right influences, until he succeeds in making the appropriate discriminations and comparisons. It is perhaps a little harder, but is not by any means impossible, to make plain what it feels like to be involved in a highly complex intellectual or emotional situation: one has but to work up the right situation about and in a person by the right series of provocations and evocations, and then tell the man that it is thus things seem and feel to people who are so involved and concerned.

In all such quasi-ostensive, sense-giving procedures verbal description plays an important, if somewhat paradoxical, part. For it is only because a man describes his experiences in certain situations in ways that we ourselves should find appropriate in the same sort of situation, that we reach assurance that meaning has been communicated, that what we wished to show has been shown, and that he and we can henceforth use our terms in the same manner. All this suggests that the terms descriptive of experience must first of all *have* a meaning in order to acquire one. The paradox vanishes when we realize the extent to which our talk about experiences, particularly in its finer phases, proceeds by analogy: we talk about the look and feel of things in so far as we successfully liken them to matters much more readily accessible. To the extent that we find each other's analogies acceptable, and to the extent that we equate them roughly with one another, we may be said to assign agreed senses to a whole range of introspective expressions. We cannot discredit these sense-giving procedures merely because they differ deeply from other sense-giving techniques: much less are they to be condemned for falling short of ideals of sense-giving which cannot in this case even be adumbrated. There is therefore nothing absolutely private, in the sense of inaccessible to description and knowledge, in any feature of our inner life: its privacy consists merely in lying outside of the hard core of public invariancy, which may indeed be the nucleus, but is not by any means the corpus of reality.

We now enter on our main business this evening: that of clearing up whatever may be involved in saying that we have things in mind, or that things are present to our minds. Here, at the outset,

it is just a little hard to see whatever can be so difficult and puzzling in the whole matter before us. For it does not seem much harder to say in what various forms of having in mind may consist, from the personal or "inward" standpoint, than to say in what they may consist, from a standpoint that is "outside" or neutral. There are countless ways in which a man may make plain to the world at large that he is taking note of some environmental object, in terms of which such taking note can be objectively set forth: if we now wish to say what the whole situation feels like from the standpoint of the person concerned in it, what more need we say than that a train is appearing before him, that it looks large and bright and extremely rapid, that it isn't clear just how many windows it has, or whether it is an express or an ordinary train, that it is gone in a flash and so forth? And if it wouldn't be hard to mention a range of words and deeds which would show us that a man was having a train in his mind's eyes and ears, it would be just as easy, with a liberal sprinkling of "as ifs," "rather likes" and "somehow different," to describe what this imaginative situation is like from the standpoint of the person involved in it. We can say that it is rather as if a train were rushing by before one, but that the whole scene somehow lacks finish, body, stability, backing, punch or a cutting edge, that its lights do not dazzle, nor its wheels really reverberate, and so on and so forth. In like manner, we can make use of queerer, still more contradictory analogies to describe what it is like to be in certain thought-situations: that the whole of some complex situation seems to be arrayed before us yet without discriminable detail, or distinction of parts, that the savour of a situation lingers on when its content has evaporated, that everything seems oddly telescoped, reduced, simplified and pregnantly empty. The linguistic resources of a mystical theology will all find good use in the descriptions in question, and it is merely stupid to object to them. I shall not give you any further displays of my phenomenological talent in saying how it feels to be in various affective or conative situations, to live through the self-withdrawal of shame, the vacillation of dismay, the luxuriant, well-fed basking of self-satisfaction, or the nerving of oneself to cope with unexpected emergencies. Suffice it to say that one constantly makes use, in all such descriptions, of analogies drawn from bodily movements and reactions, and that many such analogies come to be acknowledged as roughly equivalent to one another, and as roughly adequate to the description of certain sorts of experience. When all is so clear, what room is there for any deep difficulties about "having in mind," which is merely a blanket locution that we spread over them all? Why should we begin to feel a profound obscurity in the whole difference between the *esse intentionale* of objects, their mere presence to our minds, and their

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esse formale, or ordinary presence in nature? Any why should we become involved in perplexities as to the relation of these two senses of being or presence to one another? Why, also, should we begin to raise further queries as to the nature of the agent or medium which has all objects in mind, or as to the still more mysterious activities in which it manages to mind them?

We may now suggest that *one* basic source of these difficulties is our whole tendency to import the language of personal doing and undergoing, which is wholly appropriate in the description of the public aspects of minding, into the description of its inner aspects, where it has only a very indirect and bracketed application. In talking about the public conduct of a purposive, intelligent creature, we must certainly make mention of the person or agent who has things in mind, we must also point to the acts or changes which evince such having in mind, and we must, in the last place, refer to the things or situations which are had in mind, things which are in some cases actual and present, whereas, in other cases, it is only as if this were the case. Since such an impressive threefold scheme is invariably appropriate in dealing with the outward aspects of our minding, we are tempted to carry it over into a different form of discourse: we then find it puzzling that it has no straightforward application, and may be led to think that it must have some subtle and recondite one. Whereas, most obviously, if I have any object engrossingly in mind, whether I be observing or imagining or merely thinking about it, my experience will be adequately described in such terms as that an object is present, or that it seems to be present, or that it is as if present, or merely that it is there. If we like to add the phrase "before me," or "for me," or "to me," to the descriptions in question, such words will only serve as brackets or as pairs of quotation-marks, which indicate that we are talking in a personal and phenomenological, and not in a physical manner. They will represent, alternatively, an abandonment of the pure description of experience, and a passing over to another quite different form of discourse.

All this does not mean that we ourselves, and our varied activities, may not often form part of what is thus apparent, and that we may not often appear as engaged in "mental" rather than purely bodily activity. When I look at a tree without total engrossment in my observing activities, I myself and my observing activity have a place in the background of the apparent picture: I may even succeed, in quick oscillations of regard, in bringing them momentarily to the forefront. But plainly I, as thus apparent, am not anything ghostly or elusive, but a commonplace, fleshly person, absorbed in the ordinary activities of turning my head, or frowning my brow, or adjusting my glance or manipulating my spectacles, and not in

anything wholly supersensible or diaphanous. And though I and my activities may appear in such cases in a vivid and central fashion, with somaesthetic enrichments quite absent from any other apparent object, there is still nothing peculiarly "inward" in the revelation in question: such appearances form but a part, and not necessarily an important part, of the whole picture which makes up the inner side of those observing activities which are themselves mirrored in that picture. Similar things would apply in the much more elaborate reflexive situations where we catch ourselves out as imagining or thinking, or where we think of, or imagine ourselves, as observing, imagining, or thinking. To the extent that the smallest element of personal activity appears in such situations, it is always the activity of ourselves as *fleshly* persons, engaged in the adjustments that we habitually do make to things present, or not present, to our senses. But in so far as we ourselves are merely imagined or thought of, we may appear to ourselves as different from what we actually are: notoriously we may appear as strong, warm, well-filled and walking, when we are in fact weak, cold, famished and lying down. We may even make our appearance in a form so scrappy and vestigial, as to snare ourselves into taking a corporeal person indefinitely presented, for an incorporeal person definitely present.

We are therefore led to make our first recommendation: that we should eschew words suggestive of personal activity or passivity in describing the inner side of our minding of objects. Such words may occur in subordinate clauses in the description of *what* is minded: they should not occur as principal verbs which describe the minding itself. We may here hark back to William of Ockham's use of the word "appear" in place of such words as "be conscious of," "think of," "be aware of," "refer to," "have in mind." Conscious having in mind will then become identical with *apparitio* or *esse apparens*: to be conscious of something will consist in nothing but the fact that something appears. We may add if we like—as Ockham also wished to add—that the things thus apparent must be apparent to *someone*, but in adding this further reference we also pass beyond the pure description of experience, and proceed to connect it with a particular fleshly creature with its own unique location in space and time. This creature may of course appear in its own perspective, but it isn't either necessary or important that it should do so. Our references to it only cast an irrelevant verbal shadow on the pure canvas of phenomenological description: we may then be led to look for an ever-elusive subject which isn't there at all, or for its wholly diaphanous acts and processes, which aren't there either. To stick to an impersonal verb like "appear" is to dispel such shadows. This is not to say that we may not usefully employ the notion of activity in the field of conscious appearance, only such activity will then be

nothing but the impersonal way in which appearances draw on each other, or in which the whole field of appearance tends towards certain developments or completions. We may note, too, that the sense of "appearance" here introduced is not at all the sense in which Mont Blanc continuously appears from the shores of Lake Geneva, much less is it the sense in which a Prime Minister may appear at a meeting. The "appearances" we are speaking of are non-repeating occurrences peculiar to the standpoint of a given individual: they snap in and out of being with a nod of the head or a wink of the eye, they are profoundly modified by personal heed or interest. In the other appearances cited, all this particularity and much of this variation has been ruled out as irrelevant: we are well on our way towards invariant "real" objects. We may note, further, that we are at present stretching the normal use of the term "appearance" to cover not only the gross presence of objects to our senses, but also their less palpable presence to imagination and thought. It is well to bring out the profound likeness of these differing situations, even if later reflection may discover gulfs between them.

We now turn to another source of those supple confusions which beset all our talk about having in mind. This, we may say, is our deep tendency to confuse things *as* they appear with things *that* appear, and to set up the former as objects comparable with the latter. We are then led to wonder how the two sets of objects thus engendered may be related to each other. We are here cheated by the deep ambiguity of such phrases as "what appears" or "what comes before us in consciousness," which stand *both* for things as they may be in nature, with all their wealth of unapparent appearances, and the final simplicity of their explanatory essence, and *also* for the same things as they may be, from time to time, inadequately and misleadingly *given*. To take an example from our common experience, described without admixture of psychological sophistication, an old cupboard yonder, whose fore-aspect partially shows through a window, may come before me *as* a cupboard, as of Victorian manufacture, and as of polished light yellow wood. It may also come before me as possessed of the doors, drawers, dimensions, hind-aspects and side-aspects characteristic of a cupboard, even if not all are revealed, and as standing at some not wholly determinable distance from myself. Soon after it may declare itself in respects that were previously indefinite, and may show itself in respects that were previously concealed. The cupboard *as* it appears at the moment is therefore always a thing incomplete, schematic, indeterminate, mutilated, which reaches out, as it were, to other appearances, in which its character may be more fully revealed. It is also a thing capable of being at variance with itself in other appearances, and even at times at variance with itself in one and the same appear-

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ance. Thus the cupboard might appear to nystagmatic or feverish observers as both swaying and jerking intermittently to and fro, while also remaining serenely in the same place. All that we have said about a cupboard present to our senses could of course be said *a fortiori* about a cupboard present to our thought alone: if there can be wildness, vagueness and head-on conflict in the former, they will enjoy a wider charter in the latter. The cupboard as it is *in nature*, is, however, by definition, an object unmutilated and complete, where gaps are filled in and conflicts ironed out: it is also a cupboard in which a great deal of variability has been set aside as due to the mere intricacy of the intercourse among beings simple and constant in themselves. We dig down to this *natural* cupboard by allowing appearances to correct and to supplement, as well as to reduce and to eliminate each other.

Things *as* they appear are, however, capable of breaking off at any point, or of completing themselves in ways at variance with their previous drift or trend. Whenever this happens we are strongly inclined to treat what can be only a half-formed mutilated approach to an object as if it were something objective in its own right: it becomes a datum, a phenomenon, an *ens rationis* or what not. We are also tempted to deny the mutilated character of such novel materials, or to hold absurdly that they only *seem* to be mutilated: alternatively we may be led, with equal absurdity, to hold that there are things in nature which are both indefinite and at variance with themselves. We then face a whole range of unanswerable questions as to the relation of our data, phenomena and other queer objects to things as they stand in nature, and, far worse than this, we are faced with a profound falsification of the inner life of the mind, which now becomes the mere existence of extraordinary contents in a novel medium. The existence of an inner life is precisely *not* this sort of vacuous actuality: it is nothing at all if it isn't such things as perspectival distortion, selective emphasis, foreshortening, foreshadowing, bias, abstraction, symbolism, one-sided presentation, delusion, partiality, obscurity, concealment: all the ways in fact, in which the things of this world permit themselves to be seemingly taken apart in order to be intelligibly reconstituted for the benefit of sensitive, reasoning creatures like ourselves. We therefore make our second recommendation: that we should be wary in making use of all those essential words—"idea," "datum," "phenomenon," "concept," "*ens rationis*" and what not—which say how things may be apparent to our senses or our thoughts. We should make every effort to avoid turning what is only a half-filled schema into a self-sufficient clear-cut thing. There is less objection to the reification of appearances if by these we understand the actual occasions or instances of appearing, rather than what appears in

them: appearances so treated may be allowed to occupy an outlying place in nature. For while in the whole process of digging down to what is simply and invariantly objective, we must steadily discard an ever growing pile of such appearances, our whole subsequent effort to explain and place such appearances, will amount, in effect, to putting them back into the nature from which they were previously extruded.

I have tried so far to build up ways of speaking about the inner life of our minds, which will rule out ghostly agencies and activities, on the one hand, as well as various sorts of rarefied objects, on the other. I have made an extended use of a verb which is lacking in the unfruitful suggestions we have deprecated, or which has them much less strongly than alternative expressions. The traditional *psychologia rationalis* does not however end with the mere elucidation of having in mind: it attempts also to classify "psychic phenomena," to determine the "dimensions of consciousness," to sort out all the various distinct ways in which things can be had in mind. Thus Brentano's classical system divides having in mind into three fundamental sub-varieties, which are imposed hierarchically upon one another. We have, in the first place, the simple having in mind of the *Vorstellung* or Idea, upon which repose, in the second place, the two antithetical possibilities of having something in mind believingly or disbelievingly, which are grouped together as the two poles of the *Urteil* or Judgement. We have also, in the third place, the "phenomena of love and hate," which are built upon both the previous mental subvarieties: in these objects are had in mind approvingly or disapprovingly, consentingly or rejectingly, likingly or dislikingly and so forth. I do not wish this evening to pass judgement on this, or on any other classificatory system. But in adopting the key-word "appearance," we must also consider whether we may not wish to distinguish various fundamental modes of appearing, which will constitute the various basic ways in which things may be had in mind. Here there would seem, *prima facie*, to be three fundamental dimensions of "appearing" that deserve special consideration. We have, in the first place, the distinction between appearing *clearly*, or "in the forefront of attention," on the one hand, and appearing *obscurely*, or in the attentive background, on the other. We have, in the second place, the all-important distinction between appearing with concreteness and intuitive realization, on the one hand, and appearing with schematic emptiness or skeletal abstractness, on the other. We also have, in the third place, the whole antithesis between those forms of appearing which are, as we say, cool, dry, colourless and cognitive, and those in which things come before us as pleasing or displeasing, as desirable or undesirable, or with a vast number of other attitudinal shadings. What we say

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on these matters cannot be very detailed, but there are points of principle that it is important to dwell on.

In regard to the "attensity" of appearing (to adopt Titchener's interesting expression) we need say little more than that it yields us by far the most impressive and direct exhibition of that queer selectivity known as having in mind. Here, if anywhere, having in mind shows itself up, in retrospective recapitulation, as something ultimate and irreducible, as something alike different from anything that could be set aside as its "content," as from any of the organic activities on which it is founded. It reveals itself in nothing but the odd clearness or lack of clearness with which things appear before us, a clearness which has nothing whatever to do with what sort of things they seem to be, nor yet with anything that *we* do in regard to them. This kind of clearness is of course closely bound up with the organic activity of heeding: it arises when a creature adjusts itself to take in certain impressions, or when it prepares itself to respond to certain objects. It involves, also, like other adjustments of the living creature, a continuous expenditure of energy. In itself, however, it has nothing whatever of energy or activity, not even the attenuated activity of the mere spectator: it consists solely in the fact that whatever comes before us is in some sense more centrally, more luminously there. Nor can we equate such variation in clearness either with a change in the intensity, or a change in the determinateness of what is thus apparent: the intensest and most definite data can be dim and obscure, while the faintest and fuzziest ones can be maximally clear. A red disc appearing intensely and with maximal definiteness in the focus of vision, will none the less suffer a characteristic obscuration when we cease to pay heed to it, which will involve no alteration in its apparent brightness nor in the apparent definiteness of its structure. The same red disc allowed to slip from the focus to the margin of vision, will soon become bereft of brightness, as well as of all definiteness of position, colour, structure and contour, but may none the less, even in its last fuzziness and faintness, remain centrally and emphatically there. Still more remarkable, it is not only possible for a thing to come before us with an emphasized forepiece, or hindpiece, or other separable element: it can come before us with an emphasized form, or quality, or relationship, or other abstract aspect. The world of a man bent on the discrimination of colour is deeply different from the world of a man devoid of this intent, yet it need not differ in the richness of its hues. It is true, no doubt, that we often say that things were dimly present to our minds, when we should, on consideration, only say that they were *ready* to be present: the mere fact that things assault our physical senses, or appear clearly in retrospect, is no good reason for saying

that they *must* have been previously apparent. The vague pinchings of our marginal boots, and other instances of the text-books, are only too often physical shadows irrelevantly obtruding themselves into phenomenological descriptions. There are, however, sufficient cases in which obscure presence, like clear presence, is a phenomenological datum: things seem to stand before us unchanged in quality, though now they enjoy, and now they cease to enjoy, the full light of our regard.

We turn now from the antithesis of the clear and the obscure, to the far more fundamental antithesis between the intuitive and the notional. There are, it is plain, two radically different ways in which things can be said to appear or be present, one of which we are always ready to describe, in paradoxical fashion, as mere presence-in-absence, while the other never seems to deserve any such diminishing qualification. In the one kind of presence we say that the thing *itself* is before us, with its parts and properties fully displayed, whereas, in the other sort of presence, it is only there in some half-formed, analogical or surrogative fashion, without elaboration of detail or complete unfoldment of nature. Its appearance is, in the one case, something carried out and achieved, whereas it is only, in the other case, something *to be* achieved: there is always an imperfection in our thoughtful references in virtue of which they can be said to press on to further confrontations, in which they will be fulfilled or satisfied. There are, it is plain, a large number of intermediate steps between the pure presence-in-absence in which *nothing* of an object is concretely present, and that final fulfilment in which *all* that it may involve will be concretely there. And if ordinary talk acknowledges many such gradations, they will be much multiplied in philosophic reflection. It will be said that in what ordinary talk takes to be the fully realized presence of the thing itself, there are countless aspects merely adumbrated or anticipated. Reflective thought may also assure us that we really have *something* of the thing itself—its character or its structure—even in references where we should ordinarily say that it was altogether absent.

We have not, however, succeeded in making plain in what this whole tantalizing difference between authentic presence, on the one hand, and presence-in-absence can be held to consist. We may, of course, simply say that it is a difference quite ultimate and unanalysable, and we may then settle down happily to all those paradoxical, well-nigh mystical analogies, in which it is so natural to describe the inner side of our thinking: we may speak in terms of "nutshell presence," of condensation and concentration, of form without matter, of vague modifications of feeling, or of unanalysable total "moods of soul." We may, in short, develop all these turns of speech which came unsought to the lips of Binet's simple charges,

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and which enjoyed a brief run of scientific respectability in the writings of the Würzburg psychologists. Such forms of speech cannot be condemned merely because they are peculiar, since the whole game of communicating the quality of experience through analogy is quite unlike any other form of discourse. Much less can we condemn them for being out of line with ordinary diction, which is, in this field, just as deeply hesitant and analogical. But there is none the less something profoundly unsatisfactory in saying that a thing can come before us in two irreducibly different manners, one of which is, in some not further explicable way, more *adequate* than the other. To speak thus is to fail altogether to account for our whole odd preference for direct seeing over mere thinking, as well as for the further fact that we look for the meaning, the completion and the test of our notional approaches in direct confrontation with their objects.

There is only one way out of this *impasse*, and that is to deny the ultimate character of the distinction before us: we must treat it as but another case of the common distinction between the actual and the dispositional. For something to appear concretely must, in short, be for it to appear *actually*, whereas for it to be only present to thought, must be only for it to be *ready to appear*. We must say, with Hume, that a man thinking of various complex detailed objects, such as conquest or government, does not really have such objects present to his mind, but only "in power," to the extent that he keeps himself in a "readiness to survey any of them, as he may be prompted by present design or necessity." Such readinesses will of course have to be distinguished from the readinesses of mere potency: otherwise we shall be always having everything in mind. They will also have to be distinguished from the readinesses of developed capacity, whenever something *could* appear before us in contexts that are not at present actual. They will be readinesses well on their way to actuality, in that most of their conditions will be actual: they will also, at times, be readinesses trembling on the verge of actuality, and held back only by their own inherent weakness, or by the press of contrary forces. If such readinesses do not necessarily involve any power to summon up appearances at will—it is not given to our minds to move mountains, nor even always to imagine them moved—it is none the less given to them to press forward to such consummations, and to hail them once achieved.

The readinesses we are mentioning will arise and vanish from one moment to another: they are in fact an important case of near-actuality, which has strangely eluded Aristotle's classificatory genius. Their presence will show itself in the actual trend or drift of appearances, but their real goal will be most adequately prefigured in the *words* which serve as their normal expression. They may also

share an important retrospective expression in statements which connect them with particular historical persons, whose *thoughts* they are then declared to have been. In such retrospective reporting we shall meet with all that language of imageless thought, of nutshell comprehension and the like, which expresses our profound astonishment at the contrast between the rich content of our remembered readiesses, on the one hand, and the poor props and pegs, the feeble intuitive rudiments, to which they previously attached themselves, on the other. There is a world of difference between *using* some such item as a germ, a blue-print or a *point de repère* out of which a varied appearance may develop, and then *staring* retrospectively at the same item, when the rush and sweep of our past readiness has been allowed to subside. We cannot achieve such a retrospective stare without also realizing all the vastly superior richness of what we were previously prepared for: we then express our sense of the irreducibility of such riches to what is now actually apparent, in the bizarre but profitable language of imageless thought.

We have so far said little about the role of words in thinking, an omission heretical and unfashionable in the prevailing climate of philosophy. We have done so designedly, since for us words have that instrumental, that ancillary, that surrogative function that they have for tradition. They mean things and situations only by being the buds, the rudiments, the evocative formulae, out of which certain fully-fledged appearances are ready to develop. Words may not be officially part of the situations they help to describe: they have none the less been *made part* of them on many occasions in the past, and are now eminently fitted to precipitate the appearances in which they themselves have been so often incorporated. If there is any indispensable function performed by words in thinking, it is only in intercalating many intermediate stages between certain conceptual readiesses and their final fulfilments. Our thought on many abstract matters is, in the first place, a readiness for much plainer words and signs in which its import could be further elucidated: these words in their turn involve readiesses for other, yet plainer words, until in the end, after a large number of similar stages, the whole dispositional ladder terminates in those actual appearances in which things themselves can be seen and shown.

I shall here merely make mention of the many problems of conceptual reference, problems connected with the final fulfilments in which our thoughtful references terminate. It is not at all hard to specify such fulfilments wherever our thought revolves about simple objects, and about situations accessible to the senses. It is harder to say in what such fulfilments may consist whenever our thought is of a negative, a disjunctive or a conditional cast, or when it is concerned with things merely probable, or possible or impossible.

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There are also difficulties connected with the fulfilments of such thoughts as are themselves concerned with other thoughts, and which may accordingly be described as readiesses for readiesses. We have also to face all the now well-worn problems concerning the fulfilment of references to things inaccessible in the past or future, or in the inner life of other persons. Here we should principally guard ourselves against undue hard-headedness or simple-mindedness: we should allow that our thought may press forward to many consummations, even if these lie on a retreating horizon, or beyond the confines of "our present state." To have a century unrolled before one like a musical phrase, to enjoy at once perspectives stemming from a large number of separate human bodies, to see spread before one, in continuous coherence, what one now can only patch and piece together: all these are states towards which one certainly does strive, even if the possibility of their realization is in the last degree obscure. I shall here put in a brief plea for the Absolute, now fallen on evil days, and become a butt for accusations of laziness, as a notion both profitable and indispensable, inasmuch as it truly sets forth the term of all our conscious references. Whether such an all-comprehensive, unbroken, unbiassed, concrete realization be a thing possible or impossible, it is certainly something towards which our thought continuously presses, and in which alone it could find final satisfaction.

We have now dealt with two of the fundamental dimensions in which having in mind can be held to vary: it may vary from the clear to the obscure, and it may vary in its intuitive or its notional character. But our inner life seems also to include the vast range of "the phenomena of love and hate": it seems possible to have things in mind lovingly or unlovingly, approvingly or disapprovingly, doubtfully or trustingly, excitedly or calmly, hesitantly or resolvedly, and so forth. It is here that I shall briefly propose a signal economy: I shall refuse to recognize any peculiar conscious orientations corresponding to the phrases in question. I shall say that the "affective" and "conative" adverbs just mentioned, and all others like them, are expressive of trends and styles and policies of action, rather than of the mere manner in which things are had in mind, that they describe the outward and dynamic, rather than the inward and apparent side of our nature. Plainly the adverbs just mentioned do stand for recognizable rhythms, policies and styles of action: we can be said to act hesitantly or resolvedly, lovingly or unlovingly, loathingly or strivingly and so on. And if they also stood for unique ways in which things could be had in mind, there could be no genuine connection between their two senses: it would merely be an empirical accident that the things they stood for went together. It would be an empirical accident that we felt pleased

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with something when we wished to act towards it in a luxuriating and caressing manner, it would be an empirical accident that we felt abhorringly towards something that we spurned and repudiated, and so on in countless similar cases. Yet it is plain that such things *are* not accidents, and that it is somehow "part of the meaning" of our various emotional and conative experiences to be connected with actions of a certain sort.

All this is explained, without any facile recourse to the synthetic *a priori*, by making the trends, styles and policies of action characteristic of our various emotional and conative attitudes, enter into experience *not* as part of its manner, but of its matter: they aren't *how* we have things in mind, but only part of *what* we have in mind. A man about to "go off" into the acts and postures constitutive of rage, grief, dismay, love, quiet determination and so forth, may also be, concurrently, a man ready for the appearances of such acts and postures: it is in this readiness for an appropriate series of appearances, that his emotional or conative *experiences* can be held to consist. They are, in short, experiences *of* striving or *of* emotional perturbation, rather than striving or perturbed experiences. All this does not mean that we wish to obscure the very deep distinction between the intimate way in which we *feel* our own trends and tendencies, and the cool, detached manner in which we *know* the tendencies of others. Our own trends and tendencies *themselves* prepare us for the appropriate conscious appearances, and themselves inspire the reports in which their own existence is acknowledged. Whereas the apparent trends and tendencies of other people have no such direct, sustaining basis, and their very existence has to be collected from men's outward deeds and utterances. Our own trends and tendencies also come before us in invariable connection with our own concretely, continuously, centrally and (in the literal sense) warmly felt bodies, whereas the trends and tendencies of other people come before us in connection with bodies that are remotely, coolly, intermittently and visually given. These, and a large number of like differences, will suffice to explain the whole difference between what is intimately felt and remotely perceived: the difference between the "warm" and the "cool" is emphatically *not* one of the fundamental dimensions of consciousness.

I have now said what I want to say about having in mind. If I haven't spoken of our inner life in the condemned language of an interior theatre, I should still not hesitate to compare it to a mirror, a glass attached to the purposeful living creature, in which things show themselves clearly or obscurely, or with varying grades of concrete elaboration. In itself *quâ* glass there is nothing whatever of personal agency, though impersonal trends may sway the succession of its pictures: personal agency may, however, be said to underlie it,

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and to be at times reflected in it. The fact that I have devoted this evening to talking about this mirror does not mean that I overestimate its importance. It does not by any means always take the lead in our intelligent, purposeful performances: much less would one wish to describe it, in Hegelian language, as the infinite truth and outcome of everything, in which all other things are taken up and transformed. But it remains important both on account of the great influence which it undeniably wields in practice, as well as for its interior clearness in which we love to luxuriate. And it is also important because it is extremely easy to be very confused about it, a truth to which all modern philosophy bears witness.

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LINGUISTIC PHILOSOPHY AND PERCEPTION¹

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PHILOSOPHICAL theories of perception are generally admitted to be responses to certain problems or puzzles allied to the ancient dichotomy between Appearance and Reality. For they have been mainly provoked by the incompatibility of the common-sense assumption that an external, physical world exists and is revealed to the senses with the well-known facts of perceptual variation and error. If only what is real were perceived just as if only what is right were done it is possible that many of those questions would never have been asked which lead to moral philosophy and a metaphysics of the external world. But sense perceptions of the same object vary so that it appears to have contradictory qualities and are sometimes completely deceptive. Nor do illusory differ internally from veridical perceptions. Moreover, perceptual variation and error can be unmasked only by such procedures as looking more carefully, listening harder, trying to touch, asking others, in short by more sense experience. So the senses are, as it were, both accused and judge in these disputes and why should a venal judge be trusted more than the criminal he tries? Such "correction" of one experience by another of the same kind seems no more reliable than the original "error." Philosophers have found all this very puzzling. They have asked, with Descartes, how anyone can be sure that he is not always mistaken whatever he perceives; that he is not surrounded by nothing but "the baseless fabric of a vision"? Certain replies or remedies are found in the three main types of traditional theories of perception; realist, representationalist or dualist and phenomenalist. These take the form of trying to explain perceptual discrepancies by some quite general account of the nature of what is perceived, what externally exists and how the two are related. Thus they seek to dispel, or justly intensify, the gnawing doubts which these discrepancies create in a reflective mind. Of course these facts do not worry the plain man nor the philosopher when out of his study. Most of us most of the time accept unquestioned the conventions of "normal" experience and correct slight abnormalities by them, forget our dreams when awake and are not cursed, or blessed, with visions and hallucinations to disturb our complacency. But it does not follow that puzzles felt by a minority in singular moments are not genuine, though this may be true.

¹ An earlier version of this paper was read to the University of London Philosophical Club in February 1951.

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I will mention, to dismiss, a possible objection. It may be asked, why a *philosophical* explanation of these facts? Physicists, physiologists can all "explain" perceptual anomalies, e.g. as the result of variation in certain of the conditions in which perception occurs. The cause having been established, the perceptual effect follows according to natural law. One who squints sees double from optical causes, the visions of the opium eater are physiologically and the persecuting voices of the paranoic psychologically conditioned. But none of these explanations satisfies a philosopher. His trouble is not about the causes but the validity of perception, its reliability as a means of knowing what externally exists. He does not care what caused him to misperceive but what he mistook for what. So he asks, what is the object perceived and of what, if anything, does perception give knowledge? These are not scientific questions. Even if scientific are the only proper answers to the problems of perception, it is useless to offer these to a philosopher without understanding his puzzlement. He is worried about what exists independent of perceptions which sometimes seem to be and always may be states of his own mind and how this can be known. He does not want to know how one event causes another according to natural law. So to offer this as an immediate counter-move is to be guilty of stupidity begging the whole issue.

I have mentioned three types of traditional philosophical perceptual theory. But is there not now a fourth to add to this collection, a linguistic theory which claims to show that problems of perception, like all other philosophical problems, are linguistic confusions to be solved either by a more careful analysis of existing languages or the invention of new terminologies? Here, I think, one must discriminate. It seems to me that the linguistic movement in philosophy has two branches or has developed in two directions. Both originate from the work of Russell, Moore and Wittgenstein, but the first owes more to *Principia Mathematica*, Moore's *Philosophical Studies*, etc., and Wittgenstein's *Tractatus-Logico-Philosophicus* and the second to Wittgenstein's later lectures and unpublished lecture notes circulated in typescript. The first is represented by Professor Ayer's *Language, Truth and Logic* (1936) and the work of Carnap and other Logical Positivists in Europe and America. The second is found in the work of Professor John Wisdom since about 1936, of Professor M. Lazerowitz and of other contemporary writers in England and America. Of course this is not intended to be a complete account of a complex philosophical movement which is still developing. I introduce it only to make a distinction important for this discussion. Nor do I suggest that the two aspects or directions are absolutely separated or clearly distinguished in each writer. I do want to suggest, however, that at least in some of its earlier forms

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linguistic philosophy does not differ in type from traditional philosophical theories and systems. This is particularly evident in the philosophy of perception. For while earlier writers, such as Ayer, criticized traditional philosophies and condemned them as nonsense, they did so from what they considered to be a superior philosophical position. This derived from the verifiability principle of meaning and took the form of an extreme empiricism coupled with a verbal theory of the *a priori*. Thus philosophical problems were traced to muddles about significance and either transformed and rehabilitated after translation into correct verbal form or shown to be not so translatable and dismissed as nonsense. Though logical positivists denied that the problem of perception and the external world is one about whether material or some other perceptual objects *exist* they did assert that it is a problem of how best to *describe* what is perceived and concluded that this requires the translation of ordinary propositions containing words for material objects, such as "chair," "table," "tree" into those more "ultimate" containing words only for sense data and the relations between them which express more adequately the form and connections of perceptual facts.¹ I do not wish to discuss this view here, but only to point out that it claims to provide a general solution of the problem and differs only in its verbal formulation from traditional phenomenalism. It is in respect of this formulation, of course, that its authors would claim superiority for it. Philosophical problems are about words and meanings not things and facts and philosophical theories are rival terminologies. One of these terminologies, however, can be shown to be correct, adequate to the facts, significant and even true in a sense in which the rest are not and thus their successful rival. In this sense a linguistic theory of perception or any other philosophical problem is on precisely the same logical level as a non-verbal traditional theory. It corrects the mistakes of its predecessors and claims their defeat and its own victory. Whether any more than they it wins general acceptance is another question. So far it has not and has, indeed, been largely abandoned or considerably modified by its originators.

The second sense of linguistic philosophy, and I am not quite sure that it should be called linguistic, though it has grown from the same root, is that in which linguistic philosophy is an attitude and method not a rival philosophical theory. In this sense there is no linguistic theory to put beside the realist, dualist and phenomenalist theories of perception. Linguistic philosophers propound no new philosophical hypotheses, not even that all philosophical problems and statements are "merely verbal." For all such generalizations are foreign to their attitude. They question, compare, challenge but, like Henry James in his last period, eschew the banality of positive

¹ Cf., e.g., *Language, Truth and Logic*, pp. 223, 224.

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statement. Their function is purely critical; to clarify, not compete with, philosophical problems and theories. They try to present the peculiar character of these questions and theories, mainly by comparison with those in other spheres, including daily life, and leave the philosopher himself to judge the outcome. To use a current jargon, their activities are meta-philosophical; employed about philosophy, not themselves philosophical in the same sense. Wittgenstein in the Blue Books described this activity as "one of the heirs of the subject which used to be called philosophy."¹ I propose to call it "meta-philosophy" reserving "linguistic philosophy" for the type I have already distinguished.

This distinction does not imply that the meta-philosopher is not concerned with the verbal expression of philosophical theories. Quite the contrary. But he does not exalt a technique of asking questions about words and meanings into a general *theory* about the nature of philosophy. He does in fact concentrate upon such questions because his material is chiefly verbal and appears at least to be at a highly sophisticated level of verbal utterance. For philosophers have always been reckoned among the most intellectual of the human species, and intellectuals are handy, if not always judicious, with symbols. But this concentration does not exclude other considerations, if relevant.

Of philosophical theories of perception, then, the meta-philosopher does not ask whether they are true or false or what alternative to them may be proposed, but in what sense of the word "theory" they are called theories. How do they resemble and differ from other formulae called by this name? He does not veto such questions as "What did Joan of Arc hear when she claimed to hear the voices of angels?" or "Are physical objects or only sense data directly perceived?" but considers their interrogative claims and the types of answer philosophers have given to them. Are these answers such as to satisfy a genuine desire for knowledge or only allay anxiety? Or do they have some other function?

No doubt the words "theory," "explanation" and "question" are vague, and to unravel all their complexities would need several articles. But there are at least two fairly well defined uses of "theory" which are relevant to philosophical theories of perception. The first is that used in science and allied studies to explain empirical facts. These are expressed in a proposition or set of propositions which connect the facts to be explained with others by an appropriate relation usually involving an analogy. From this further facts are deduced which, if confirmed, or not refuted, by observation establish the theory to a certain degree of probability. The object of this procedure is to eliminate rival theories and leave the correct or most

¹ Original TSS, vol. 2, p. 17.

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probable explanation of the facts. Some such theories may be directly, others indirectly, confirmed. A theory that the Browns have left the neighbourhood because they were bankrupt may be directly confirmed. The family may be traced to their new hide-out and their finances investigated. A theory that light is transmitted through a frictionless fluid, the ether, or that Brown's curious behaviour is due to repressed memories in his subconscious mind can be only indirectly confirmed. For no one can directly observe the ether or an unconscious mind. But facts may be deduced and confirmed which would be impossible or inexplicable if these theories were not true. Sometimes two different theories may explain and be confirmed, or not refuted, by the same facts so that no crucial experiment can decide, empirically, between them. A choice may then be made for pragmatic or "aesthetic" reasons. Such are ease of manipulation, internal coherence and logical simplicity and, perhaps, initial plausibility. These were, at least at one time, the basis of choice between ptolemaic and copernician theories in astronomy,¹ and may be now between wave and particle theories in physics, freudian and jungian theories in psychology. The existence of these factual indiscernibles is, however, embarrassing, and investigators always hope that it may be temporary. When they occur at an early stage in a science, as in psycho-analysis, there is still plenty of chance that facts may eventually decide between them. If they cause a crisis in an advanced science, such as physics, this will be one with an already well-established explanatory system of natural laws and the habit of experiment and loyalty to fact will keep its practitioners hoping and trying for an experimental decision. At least they will know what would give such a decision and be able to recognize it if it happens. If facts are ignored or interpreted to fit a theory which they appear to refute, beyond a certain point, it becomes analytic and useless. It ceases to be an empirical theory. Confirmation and refutation by fact is an essential part of the meaning of "theory" in its empirical sense. But if neither factual, pragmatic or aesthetic considerations could conceivably determine the choice of a theory, the titles "explanation" and "theory" would be refused and the proposal dismissed as mere fantasy or wild speculation.

Another use of "theory" occurs in the abstract studies of mathematics and logic. Theories of numbers, functions, classes, continuity, infinity, etc., do not explain or lead to the discovery of empirical fact. They are neither confirmed nor refuted by observation. Explanation in them consists of connecting the notion to be explained with others in a deductive system. The criteria of its success are logical consistency and generality.

How far, if at all, the metaphilosopher asks, do any of these

¹ Cf. L. S. Stebbing, *A Modern Introduction to Logic*, 2nd ed.

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criteria apply to philosophical theories of perception? I shall first outline the main features of each type of theory; if these do not coincide with the exact form of the theory held by any particular philosopher this will not seriously affect the argument. For the details do not affect the type, principles and purpose of these theories.

A traditional realist theory of perception asserts that whatever is perceived is externally or independently real, i.e. not dependent on a percipient for its existence and qualities. Views of this sort were held, e.g. by the late Professors S. Alexander and J. Laird. On this view there is no problem of an illusory perception wholly dependent on a perceiver for its existence and indistinguishable from one supposed not so dependent. For all that is perceived is independent of a percipient. No victim of a so-called delusion seems when perceiving more responsible for the bent look of the stick in water, the hallucinatory rat or the heavenly voices than for the straight stick on the ground, his neighbour's cat and the soothing tones of the psycho-analyst. Nor is he, says the realist. Perceptual differences, usually distinguished as veridical and illusory, are of equally independent status, but the external world is much wider than philosophers and plain men have imagined. It contains sun, moon and stars, both the vast, solid whirling spheres of the astronomers and the flat disks and twinkling points seen from the earth. So, also, it contains Joan of Arc's voices and Macbeth's dagger. All are independently real. But not all realities will fulfil the same expectations. The Grand Inquisitor will not hear Joan's voices, not because they are unreal but because he does not fulfil the necessary conditions. Perhaps he is not saintly enough. It will be useless to try to drink from the mirage lake, and Macbeth's hallucinatory dagger will not murder Duncan. These are peculiar objects manifested in rare circumstances, but not on that account to be excluded from the external world. Thus are perceptual anomalies explained, and reality and illusion reconciled by a thorough-going realist theory.

The dualist theory reverses this hospitality. Just because what is perceived varies with perceivers and conditions, and is sometimes completely deceptive, Descartes, Locke and other dualists conclude that what is externally real is never perceived. Real objects may cause percipients to have private sensory ideas and impressions, but they remain for ever hidden behind this sensory smoke screen. That an external world exists and has certain properties can be known, if at all, only by rational intuition or deduction not by sense perception. Things in themselves are "intelligible" not "sensible." Some dualists, e.g. Descartes, thought such knowledge possible. Cf. Descartes' "My physics is only geometry." Others, e.g. Locke, doubted this. In their present state of "mediocrity and probationership" men must be for ever content with the "twilight of probability" about

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the nature and laws of the physical world. The "weakness of our faculties" is such that "natural philosophy is not capable of being made a science."¹ Like the ignorant countryman before the great clock at Strasbourg² men must trust in God that the wheels go round behind the face on which they laboriously trace their effects. Careful observation of sensory uniformities may facilitate successful prediction and be ground for hope that the "secret nature" of matter is operating behind the scenes but never justify a claim to know this. Natural science may be practically useful but never genuinely informative. For all perception is illusion, though some illusions are more useful than others. Epistemologically, there is no difference between the delusions of madness and the observations of Newton. Thus does the dualist reverse the realist theory. For the realist an illusion is an object having its own degree of reality; for a dualist any perceptual object is a species of illusion.

The phenomenalist tries to combine the best of both the former theories. He admits that only private ideas, impressions or sense data are directly perceived, but denies that external objects are imperceptible realities behind these appearances. Why these crocodile's tears, cries Berkeley, about hidden objects and invincible ignorance? Philosophers raise a dust and then complain that they cannot see. Those collections and sequences of sensory ideas which the dualist laments are but the unreliable "signs" of physical objects, and their laws just *are* those objects and their uniform behaviour. There is nothing hidden which cannot be made manifest. Or, in later versions of the theory, both physical objects and illusions are "constructions" from the basic materials given to sense. Sensory uniformities create certain expectations in a percipient. When these are fulfilled he asserts the existence of physical objects and their laws. When they are not, as when the "dagger" cannot be clutched or the tormenting "voices" traced to a visible source, he admits to having been mistaken or deluded. Illusions and hallucinations differ from physical objects as imperfect from perfect articles. Both are manufactured from the same materials.

Finally, there is the modern, verbal form of this theory already mentioned. According to this, objects are "logical," not literal constructions from sense data. This means that statements containing words for such objects are translatable into certain implied propositions containing words only for sense data and their relations at a more fundamental level of discourse. The philosophical problem of perception may be solved by inventing such a basic terminology and by it correcting or, at least exhibiting, the deficiencies of ordinary language in which the problem occurs. The suggested language, like

¹ *Essay on Human Understanding*, ed. Fraser, Book IV, Ch. 3.

² *Ibid.*, Book III, Ch. 6.

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any other technical terminology, is not recommended for conversational use, but as more analytic it shows more clearly the structure of perceptual facts and reveals that ordinary language depends upon another which is logically prior.¹

Are these empirical theories? One resemblance between them and such theories is that they claim to explain certain empirical facts. It is by observation that we distinguish physical objects from illusions, and are thus led to ask in precisely what this difference consists. But they differ in the characteristic which distinguishes empirical from other theories. They cannot be tested. Every philosophical theory of perception is compatible with all perceptual facts. No counter-example is conceivable, and so no means of deciding between them on empirical grounds. Obviously no perception will be admitted illusory by a realist or veridical by a dualist. For one reality swallows appearance; for the other appearance swallows reality so far as perception is concerned. The imperceptible realities of the dualist cannot by definition be confirmed by observation. Nor can experience fail to confirm the phenomenalist thesis that there exist no imperceptible physical objects, and that all objects are "constructions" from sense data. Finally, every sentence of the physical object language will oblige the linguistic phenomenalist by being translatable into sense data sentences. Unlike less fortunate translators from English into Italian or Chinese into French he will not be faced with the idiom which stubbornly refuses transformation into an alien tongue. If a sentence contains a physical object word it *must* be equivalent to a sentence or sentences containing only sense data words. The theory cannot even formulate a possible exception. All these theories would be better expressed by the use of "must," though this at once explodes their factual pretensions.

If these theories are not testable by fact, may they be judged by the pragmatic and aesthetic criteria already mentioned? Is one theory logically simpler, easier to manipulate, internally more coherent or even more plausible than the rest? No existing theory would be universally acclaimed superior on these counts. But even if one were, an important difference would remain between a philosophical and a scientific theory chosen for these reasons. For one scientific theory is preferred to another even for pragmatic and aesthetic reasons partly because, as the first suggests, these are connected with predictive power. One may predict an eclipse on the ptolemaic theory and the course of a neurosis on the jungian theory, but one may do so more easily on the copernican or freudian theories. But philosophical theories of perception are neither formulated nor used to predict the course of sense experience nor has a philosopher

¹ Cf. A. J. Ayer, "The Terminology of Sense Data," *Mind*, NS. Vol. LIV, p. 312.

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with the help of such a theory discovered any perceptual fact or regularity unknown to plain men. From these considerations a meta-philosopher would suggest that the word "theory" is not being used by philosophers of perception as it is in empirical explanation and discovery.

Since there is no empirical choice between these theories, their propositions appear to be analytic and so allied to the second type of theory in logic and mathematics. But though they do not give information about what is perceived—since they are not empirical theories—neither are they purely abstract elaborations of concepts or symbols. They may be tautologies of a sort but not of that which comprise purely formal systems. They are much more closely connected with the experience which has caused the problem they try to solve. It may be hard to say in what way this is so, but no one would describe a philosopher constructing a theory of perception as doing mathematics or pure logic. Nor would one classify the writings of philosophers on perception with *Principia Mathematica* or Euclid's *Elements* on account of the similarity of their contents. So "theory" in the second sense does not apply to these formulae.

These are certainly strange theories which are neither empirical nor purely formal. Earlier positivist philosophers, under the influence of the verification principle of meaning, dismissed them as nonsense. This is inadequate since it fails to bring out the very peculiar features of this particular brand of nonsense or explain its influence. Or they maintained that since all these theories accommodate the same perceptual facts they all have the same meaning, and are, therefore, essentially the same theory. This is also far too narrow. That they use different words to express the same facts cannot be ignored by a meta-philosopher. Berkeley, e.g., thought he was *opposing* not merely *repeating* Locke's theory. But if the realist has not proved a hitherto unsuspected property of Macbeth's visionary dagger besides its ostensible likeness to the weapon which killed Duncan, viz. its external reality, what has he done? One answer, allied to the nonsense view, is that he is misusing the word "real" which is ordinarily used as opposed to "unreal" or "illusory." In effect, the realist denies this opposition. Everything is real. But, then, nothing is, for the word no longer has any particular significance. What appears a striking piece of information about the world is revealed as a solecism. Similarly, the dualist misuses "illusory," so that there is no longer any perceptual distinction between the murderous instrument and Macbeth's vision. Since every perception is delusive, "illusory" is no longer opposed to "veridical." Other words, too, are misused in this theory. "Physical object," e.g. used for an imperceptible cause of sense perceptions so that to the simple question, "Did you see any coal in the cellar?" the dualist must give the grossly

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misleading reply, "I saw what might be the effects of coal in the cellar though I cannot be certain." For this reply would certainly not be understood to assert that the cellar was full of solid fuel, but that it was empty save, perhaps, for a pile of dust which the observer could not clearly discern. "Cause," too, is misused. For though this word may be ordinarily used for what is, in fact, unperceived, such as bacteria or electric current, it is not significantly used for what is in principle untestable. Likewise, phenomenologists use "construction" and "translation" illegitimately. "Construction," e.g., is normally used for the manufacture of an object from suitable materials by human or animal skill. Some objects, furniture and aircraft, are manufactured, others, trees and rivers, are not. For the phenomenologist, however, everything at the common-sense perceptual level, whether real or illusory, is a more or less complete artefact, the manufacture of which requires a very peculiar skill. Or, every statement about such objects can be translated into others which imply such manufacture. It may be urged that in the theory these complexes are contrasted with ideas, impressions, sense data, which are particular and form the materials of construction and the basic items named in the approved translations. But no one has yet unambiguously identified and christened these particulars or shown how they are used to produce the alleged result. So there is no genuine contrast and the usage remains illegitimate.

This suggestion seems to imply that philosophers do not understand the use of their native languages which may be thought absurd. Nevertheless, it is perfectly possible for some one to use a language correctly without understanding the conditions of its significance. An alternative, however, is that philosophers do not misuse but try to change ordinary language. They propose for certain old words new, or extended, uses. Realists know perfectly well how "real" is ordinarily used, but they decide to extend this use into territory normally served by "illusion." The distinction formerly drawn will reappear in "perceived in normal circumstances" and "perceived in abnormal circumstances." Dualists recommend a converse change in "illusion," and phenomenologists appropriate changes in "construction," "translation," etc. The result is a set of self-contained terminologies devised to present the facts of perception so as to elicit and resolve their puzzling anomalies. The use of familiar words disguises the synthetic quality of these reformed instruments. So it is not surprising that even their authors do not realize their true nature. The meta-philosopher does so by a technique of question and comparison never before undertaken.

This meta-philosophical account of what may be called first level theories of perception must not be confused with any which asserts that one such reformed terminology, e.g. that of phenomenism, is

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more correct or accurate than the rest over which it should, therefore, take precedence. For this, as already suggested, there appears no justification. All are of the same value or disvalue.

Philosophical theories of perception, then, may not be theories in any usual senses, but linguistic proposals of the sort described. They give no new knowledge of perceptual facts. Nor do they solve the problem of perception by proving, as they may seem to attempt, that there is no fundamental distinction between physical reality and illusion. What they do suggest are new forms of expression for familiar facts. This may not be information in a scientific sense, but, as poetry shows, it is far from worthless. That is why to suggest that philosophical theories are nonsense is rightly resented. No doubt this meant only that they are not verifiable, which is correct, but it suggests that they are silly, which is not. Poets and novelists tell us nothing that we do not know or could not learn from history or other text-books, but the difference between Shakespeare and Plutarch is tremendous even though both relate the same story. So in a philosopher we meet the facts about which we discourse continuously in daily life but, as it were, in a play, staged, detached from their normal context of knowledge and action. And just as *Othello* concentrates on jealousy while not neglecting the rest of human life, so the philosopher enlarges one aspect of perception, adapting the rest to its claims. In this slightly distorted medium the familiar appears strangely transmuted. It may excite or repel but can never again be commonplace. For the first time, perhaps, we realize how very remarkable are the facts always taken for granted, the primary condition of life, the facts of sense experience.

The realist enlarges the fact that both in veridical and illusory perception we seem to be presented with that for which we are not responsible. We do not consciously create either what are termed realities or illusions. True, they differ, but this can be adjusted in the next chapter. What is important is that the world is manifest, and it is not only my world. This emphasis is important both on its own account and in certain historical contexts when other emphases have been long predominant. Realist doctrines usually flourish after a spell of dualism or phenomenalism. The dualist stresses how much is hidden from our personal rash judgments. The jug appeared blue, but in daylight or to those with better eyesight it was obviously green. There seemed to him to be voices but they had no discernible cause and no one else heard them. The table looks solid and still, but what of the atomic commotions behind its apparently impassive surface? Perhaps we are always ill-judging but have been lucky to find some signs which have some survival value for us. Dualism is popular when scientists are probing beyond facts open to daily observation. Then there is the phenomenalist who stresses that what

can never be revealed does not interest us. Nor do we accept sense experience uncritically, but from it create the realities and illusions about which we agree, or invent a common language which reflects such agreement. Phenomenalism delights a sophisticated intellectual period in which realism seems "naïve" and dualism "metaphysical."

I should prefer not to call a philosophical theory a proposal for a new or expanded language for this sounds too self-conscious and intellectual. True, words are used somewhat differently in these theories as they are in poetry, but they also share a feature with other theories, viz. they embody a picture or analogy. Notions like "hidden," "manifest," "making," "receiving" are not merely verbal but pictorial. They help the philosopher to tell his story and incidentally reveal his own attitudes. Philosophical theories are much more like good stories than scientific explanations. No general, said Plato scornfully,¹ ever learned the art of warfare from Homer—nor one might add, the laws of physics from the *Timaeus*, yet both Homer and Plato have outlived their contemporary scientists. Both have done so not for the facts to be learned from their works but for their presentation of those facts. They were both good storytellers. Nor is this survival only due to perfect style, but also to the presentation of facts in a certain spirit or temper of the writer or his period though not confined to either. For example, it is commonplace to say that the appeal of Plato is "other-worldly." To those of different temperament, indeed, this attitude is often repulsive, and leads them not merely to disagree with but violently to condemn Plato as a "bad influence," leading people to deny the evidence of their senses and to despise democracy. Yet whom did Plato ever lead to fall into a ditch while contemplating the Form of all ditches? He never denied the facts of sense perception and change about which one could have opinion if not knowledge. What he did was to make them the villains and outcasts of his story, to spatter them with mire, throw them into lurid contrast with the dignified effigies contemplated by the Intellect. This may be deplored, but is quite different from telling factual falsehoods. Everyone, it is sometimes said, is born either a little platonist or a little aristotelian. Whatever be the truth of this aphorism has little to do with the truth and falsity of these doctrines. It refers rather to temperamental differences. To refer to these may be thought slightly improper. Ought not philosophy to be impersonal, unemotional and strictly rational? The point is that it isn't, and this cannot be ignored by a meta-philosopher. Moreover, since the facts are the same for each and empirical confirmation of their explanatory hypotheses impossible, one can account for different philosophical theories only as differences of presentation, language and attitude. For, plainly, philosophies differ and

¹ Cf. *The Republic*, trans. Cornford, Part V, Ch. XXXV, p. 322.

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philosophers disagree. That these differences can be only about facts or logical proofs may be merely an intellectualist superstition. Language has many uses besides that of giving factual information or drawing deductive conclusions.

So the realist philosopher besides emphasizing an important feature of perceptual experience also conveys a robust confidence in its deliverances. Some to be sure are slightly queer, but they are members of the same family as those more normal. All are entertained with the same cheerful hospitality. By contrast with this sunny assurance, the dualist who stresses another aspect of perception is, as already noted, of a melancholy turn of mind. He is haunted by fears of a "malicious demon" who mocks his most careful observations, and he laments perpetually the lowly state and limitations of men. True, this may have important political consequences. It enabled Locke to discourage the Sects from dispute about the Trinity when they could not even understand the nature of a stone. But the general effect is somewhat depressing for the dualist makes little concession to our preference for a "happy ending" to a story. Still, he does not quite despair; we can but trust God and our senses and maybe we shall be lucky and survive. The temperature rises again with the phenomenalist. He laughs, with Berkeley, at the dualist's hidden treasures and lamentations. The phenomenalist emphasizes that the world of physical objects and illusions is sensory. There is no need to seek further for it than the sense perceptions of percipients. It is built up by care, experience and good judgment in discriminating and connecting sense experiences. If it be objected that this may be true of knowledge of the world but cannot apply to the world, the phenomenalist will ask for a criterion of this difference. Where and what are these phantom objects which exist independently of perceptions, and of what possible use can they be to human beings? Objects are not merely given in every sense experience as for the simple-minded realist for statements about them are always subject to revision. Nor are they inaccessible as for the despondent dualist. They are, as it were, prizes not presents; earned not bestowed. For the realist Nature is a fairy godmother, for the dualist a taskmaster of sweated labour which is never rewarded, for the phenomenalist, a Torquemada whose puzzles can be solved by human ingenuity. So the phenomenalist expresses a cautious, even he likes to think a scientific, optimism. He trusts his senses and himself, but not uncritically, for time is long and art fallible. He is the sophisticated "intellectual" of philosophers of perception.

So may the meta-philosopher interpret these theories, not merely as verbal misuse or recommendation but as pictures, stories having social and personal causes and conveying emotional or quasi-emotional attitudes. The artist creates a world which is not a simple

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replica, statement or theory of the real world. Yet, however fantastic, it is never wholly alien to that world. Indeed, the more fantastic sometimes the more revealing. Philosophy is too often compared with science, history, theology which contain natural laws, theories and factual statements. When a similar revelatory claim for philosophy is challenged and fails the subject is despised as worthless nonsense. Yet its historical influence is unquestionable and not on the worst minds. This may be better understood if philosophy is compared with the arts. I do not identify philosophy with art or literature. A meta-philosopher abhors such pronouncements. Moreover, there are some characteristics common to philosophy and factual studies which I have not emphasized. I suggest only that a comparison with the arts may more effectively exhibit some features which modern critics often overlook. What does not instruct or explain in ways at present fashionable is not, therefore, contemptible. I have tried to suggest such a comparison for theories of perception. In these philosophers, like artists, present pictures of perceptual facts, expressed in distinctive styles, which arrest attention and direct attitudes towards the familiar world. Such presentations may differ completely though of the same facts. This situation is not unknown also in art. Platonist and aristotelian, e.g. may be compared with classic and romantic. Hence philosophical dispute and disagreement. This may explain, too, another feature. The great philosophers of the past even if they supposed themselves to inform also held this but one part of their task. Philosophy was the focus of many human interests. Perhaps not even Milton's music and perpetual feasts should be overlooked.¹ But isn't there a problem of perception to be solved? Is there?

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¹ *Comus*, lines 477-80.

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THERE are so many logical systems that it is difficult to find any criteria to which they must all conform. It is, however, generally agreed that all logical systems, however diverse in character, must avoid falling into contradiction. Internal consistency would, indeed, inevitably form part of any definition of what is meant by a logical system.

This does not, however, mean that it is the logician's business to decide what contradictions there are; as long as he takes care, within the limits of his own system, to see that they do not occur. To quote Professor C. I. Lewis, "To discover what contradicts what, we must always consult the character of experience,"¹ and it is not for the formal logician to do this.

There can be little doubt, however, that it is the business of a philosopher to discover what contradicts what. This at least must be agreed, if we accept as our criterion of what philosophers ought to be doing some of the things which they, as a matter of fact, are doing and have done in the past. And it is a plain matter of fact that competent philosophers have spent a good deal of their time nosing out contradictions or at least deciding whether apparent contradictions were real ones or not. Philosophers of religion have, for instance, canvassed the question as to whether a Being defined by non-temporal predicates could legitimately be said to interfere in temporal affairs, or whether the concept of such an activity by such a Being is a self-contradictory one. And, in the endless discussion about other minds, philosophers have been partly concerned to show that the request to know other minds, or more precisely, other people's feelings, in *exactly* the same way as we know our own, involves a contradiction.

But to turn without more ado to the particular problem with which I shall be dealing: when Berkeley wrote that "The *absolute* existence of unthinking things are words without a meaning or which include a contradiction"² he was claiming to have found a logical contradiction in a proposition which was, at the time, held to be true (the proposition that unthinking things do exist absolutely) and which to-day, if not always held to be demonstratively true, is nevertheless widely believed by philosophers to be meaningful.

It is this proposition of Berkeley's that I want now to discuss. Not that it presented a problem for Berkeley himself. It was rather one

¹ "A Pragmatic Conception of the Priori," p. 287, *Readings in Philosophical Analysis*, ed. Feigl and Sellars.

² *Principles of Human Knowledge*, p. 125, Everyman Library.

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way of expressing his New Principle which he thought needed only a certain honest reflection to be universally admitted as evidently true. Nor would such a proposition present a problem for Berkeley's opponents, ancient or modern, who would regard it as patently false. But for those philosophers who both tend to accept and to reject such a proposition, there is a problem; and it is for such philosophers that I am writing.

First, however, although it should hardly be necessary after so many years of Berkeleian exegesis, it will perhaps not be a waste of time to make quite clear the exact nature of the proposition which Berkeley presented as a self-evident truth. The important word, as is shown by the italics, is absolute. By this word Berkeley means to show that he is not considering any phenomenalistic solution to the problem of the external world, though he himself, at least in part, was prepared to accept such a solution. By absolute he means, out of all relation both to perception and to the imagination. Any analysis, therefore, of unobserved objects in terms of what one might see or hear or feel or smell is not being considered and is not therefore either being accepted or rejected. It is also worth while noticing that Berkeley restricts his analysis to the consideration of unthinking things, and the word "unthinking" can, in this context, be taken pretty widely. Berkeley is not, therefore, concerned with any possible Leibnizian solution to the problem of the external world in terms of monads nor even any Berkeleian solution in terms of an All-Seeing Eye. The absurdity for Berkeley lies solely in the postulation of existing things which are not *in any sense* themselves aware and are not *in any sense* objects of actual or imagined awareness.

To postulate such entities, argues Berkeley, is to be guilty of a contradiction in terms.

Now, despite Berkeley's affirmation that he had common sense to back him in his analysis of our perceptual awareness, it is a commonly accepted view amongst philosophers that the man-in-the-street, if he were to clarify his views, would accept the very proposition that Berkeley was attacking. The average man believes that when he leaves a room it remains exactly as it was before he left it. By this he does not mean to assert any hypothetical proposition as to how it would look if he were there nor, unlike Berkeley, does he bring in his religious beliefs, if he has any, to support the continued existence of the room. No! the room and its contents are, for the average man, a collection of unthinking things, and, to use the word in the sense given to it by Berkeley, they exist absolutely. There is little doubt that this point of view expresses our unsophisticated belief, and it is worth while noting that such a point of view owes nothing to the abstract, academic conception of matter that Berkeley was attacking.

This whole-hearted, if unconscious, rejection by the man-in-the-

street of Berkeley's argument might give us pause, if we accepted the view that logical contradictions must be obvious, since neither the sophisticated philosopher nor the naïve pedestrian would waste any time over talk about a round square or a lion that was both blue and yellow all over. But we have seen reason to believe that not all logical contradictions are obvious. It therefore follows that neither claims to have discovered them nor counter claims to have discovered their non-existence can be allowed to stand without further debate.

This makes the matter more serious, since the ways in which the majority of philosophers to-day might tend to support Berkeley against the naïve realist do not touch the logical issue at all. There is, for example, a considerable body of philosophers who would argue, on empirical grounds, that the average man must, in some respects, be mistaken. Such philosophers would use the findings of the physicists and the physiologists to argue, for instance, that colours do not literally inhere in objects and that therefore, *as a matter of fact*, a room as seen is not the same as a room existing on its own. But these arguments, even if valid, do nothing to support the particular proposition which Berkeley is considering; since such philosophers would assert the logical possibility of unseen colours, shapes, sounds, etc., whilst denying that, as a matter of fact, all of these occur.

If, then, we are not to accept common sense as a sufficient refutation of Berkeley we must take seriously the various attempts of philosophers to show that there is no logical contradiction in the postulation of the absolute existence of unthinking entities. Now, since Berkeley's attempt to establish an Idealist metaphysic has been widely rejected, there have also been many attempted refutations of his argument. If, however, we concentrate solely on the logical issue, most of the criticisms centre round the problem of meaning, since to say of a statement that it is self-contradictory is equivalent to saying that it is meaningless. And the first obvious criticism is this: Berkeley, it is said, thought that he had found a contradiction where there was none because of an elementary confusion between meaning and verification. Obviously, it is argued, it would be a contradiction in terms to say that the existence of something, which is, by definition, unobserved and unimagined, could be conclusively verified, since verification consists in such activities as looking, touching, tasting, smelling, all of which are ruled out *a priori* by the word "absolute." But to regard a proposition as meaningless because we have debarred ourselves from pointing out the objects to which it is supposed to refer is to make the usual empiricist blunder of considering the meaning of a sentence as if it were somehow inherent in the objects or images to which the sentence refers. It is we who mean, it will be said, and neither objects nor mental images, and there are, therefore more ways of speaking meaningfully than pointing out these objects

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or having these mental images. In fact, to be more precise, such activities or states are not ways of speaking at all.

This leads us to the second typical criticism of Berkeley, namely that his arguments are spoiled by an unduly narrow criterion of meaningfulness. Berkeley's whole position, it will be said, at least so far as the proposition we are now considering is concerned, rests on the identification of the meaningful with the imaginable. If, however, we reject this identification we can test Berkeley's proposition by at least two other criteria which are often nowadays considered to be adequate criteria for meaningfulness, namely, accordance with grammatical rules and accordance with common usage. Now clearly the postulation of the absolute existence of unthinking things is not meaningless in the grammatical sense. Berkeley himself must have realized this since he is prepared to argue his case and one needs no arguments to prove that a sentence like "Before evening to do some" is unintelligible. In any case many admitted contradictions do not sin against the rules of grammar. To talk of a round square is, from a grammatical point of view, merely to qualify a noun by an adjective.

The test of common usage might, however, be considered to offer conclusive evidence against Berkeley's point of view. It might be argued that the words "the absolute existence of unthinking things" although in themselves a trifle too academic for popular tastes, nevertheless pass the test of common usage in ways in which talk of a round square does not.

When ordinary people talk in ordinary language about unthinking things such as chairs and tables they certainly do not mean to be talking about their own actual or hypothetical experiences. Therefore, we could argue that even if, as a matter of fact, the existence of things is always correlated with the perception either of ourselves or of a Divine observer, nevertheless, what people mean to talk about when they mention chairs and tables is not this contingent fact. They mean to talk about the chairs and tables themselves. And since, as I have remarked before, it is we who mean and not objects, the question as to whether, as a matter of fact, there are such independent objects, is not a question whose answer, one way or the other, could affect the meaningfulness of our ordinary use of language.

Now, regarded as an easy triumph over Berkeley, both the arguments from grammatical and common usage might be considered annihilating. It has been easy to show that the words which Berkeley claims to have no meaning are intelligible in a grammatical sense and also intelligible or meaningful to ordinary people. But since Berkeley must have known that the proposition he was attacking was grammatical and since he certainly knew that the position he was defend-

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ing was considered highly paradoxical, it is worth while trying to find out in what sense of meaning Berkeley regarded the proposition that unthinking things exist absolutely to be meaningless. Before we do this, however, there is a more radical kind of criticism to be considered. Some contemporary philosophers have tried to turn the tables on Berkeley by showing that not merely the grammar of language nor its common usage but its very logical form, demand that the proposition which Berkeley regarded as meaningless¹ should be regarded as meaningful. Lord Russell, for instance, tries to show² that Berkeley's own proposition³ is absurd. He has two arguments. Firstly he points out that, although being a nephew implies having an uncle, yet to be a nephew is a contingent fact about a person, who might very well be the same person without such a relationship. Similarly, he argues, to know or think that something exists implies that we are knowing it or thinking of it but this is a contingent relationship which does not necessarily alter the intrinsic nature of the thing known. Secondly Russell argues that there must exist numbers which have never been thought of since the number of possible multiplications of two integers is infinite. This, says Russell, would be impossible if Berkeley's arguments were correct.

Now, for those already convinced, these arguments have considerable strength since Russell attempts to base his arguments not on empirical facts but on the logic of human relationships and of the numerical system. However, the comparison between such relationships and such a system and the existence of unthinking things is, at the best, only analogical and need not be accepted by a confirmed supporter of Berkeley. The facts about a person in so far as he is or is not a nephew can all be considered within the framework of imagination and perception and we can thus make legitimate abstractions concerning such a person. We can think of him at one time as if he were the son of an only child and, at another, as if this father had had a brother. This, the Berkeleyite would say, doesn't give us the authority to extend our analogy illegitimately to the consideration of objects supposedly existing outside the framework of imagination or perception.

Russell's second example is no more conclusive than the first, although it must be disposed of differently. The plausibility of this example depends on the analogy between the existence of non-thought-of numbers and the existence of non-thought-of things. But surely we must not talk of numbers as if they were things waiting to

¹ "That unthinking things can exist absolutely."

² Chapter on "Berkeley," *History of Western Philosophy*.

³ "That the absolute existence of unthinking things are words without a meaning or which include a contradiction."

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be counted? Surely it is a dangerously stretched analogy from "there are uncounted numbers" to "there are unobserved and unimagined colours"? In fact this particular argument would seem to be more consistent with the Russell of early days who believed in numbers as Platonic universals than with the modern Russell who (admittedly in a very specialized sense of the word) believes in the triviality or tautological nature of mathematical propositions. But even if Russell's attack can be turned, arguments remain which show that sentences about existence have a different logical behaviour from the kind of descriptive sentence in terms of perception and imagery by which Berkeley wished to replace them.

G. E. Moore's by now famous argument distinguishing between the logical behaviour of words like "growls" and a word like "exists" is too well known to repeat here. More recently, Mr. Berlin, in a formidable attack on Phenomenalism,¹ has argued that there is an irreducibly categorical nature about sentences asserting existence which divides them logically from the hypotheticals with which the Phenomenalist would seek to replace them. And although his article is not specifically directed against Berkeley he makes quite clear his position *vis-à-vis* that philosopher by asserting more than once that the link between perception and the perceived object is contingent, not necessary, and that the difficulties we have in not being able to perceive absent objects are all empirical in nature.

Now, if Berkeley is, in any way, to be defended against the types of attack which have just been outlined it cannot be done in terms of Berkeley's own solution to the problem of the external world. One reason for this is that, for Berkeley, there really was no problem. Being convinced that an external world, properly so called, is a contradiction in terms, he immediately made the world internal to the Divine consciousness. But, more important still, Berkeley's own positive suggestions do not even solve what problem there is. In fact they present us with a dilemma. God, originally postulated to fill the gaps in our perception, is always, for Berkeley, in danger of becoming a transcendent Being to whom the ascription of positive predicates is illegitimate. (That is, He becomes as abstract a notion as Matter was for Berkeley an abstract idea.) If, on the other hand, we give to God the task of helping us out with our perceptual puzzles, He Himself must be conceived as sufficiently like ourselves to be considered a percipient Being, and the question then arises as to what manner of existence is enjoyed by those parts of the universe to which God is not at present attending. If it be retorted that God is omnipercipient it must be answered that, since perception, as we know it, is necessarily a selective process, occurring in time, the notion of an all-percipient Being has as much right to be considered

¹ *Mind*, July 1950. "Empirical Propositions and Hypothetical Statements."

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a contradiction in terms as has the notion of the absolute existence of an unthinking thing.

This article is not, however, primarily an attack on Berkeley's own positive suggestions about the external world. It will now be necessary therefore to pick up the threads where we left off and ask in what sense the contention that it is meaningless to talk of the absolute existence of unthinking things is a plausible one, despite the criticisms that have been levelled against it.

To begin with I think we may admit that the main criticism against Berkeley, namely, that he has too narrow a criterion of meaningfulness, might be allowed to stand. If sentences about the absolute existence of unthinking things are, in a manner of speaking, nonsensical or meaningless, they are nevertheless not nonsensical in the way that a nonsense jingle or the conjunction of two obviously incompatible predicates are nonsensical. Just as it would be a sin against the correct use of language to insist that only logical certainty is certainty proper and that therefore there is no place for such sentences as "It is certain the sun will rise to-morrow," so it would be a sin against the correct use of language to lump together the kinds of sentence which, if Berkeley is right, contain a hidden or unobvious contradiction and the kinds of sentences which are obviously self-contradictory or meaningless. Since both a study of common speech and of the more sophisticated logical analyses of, say, Professor G. E. Moore, prove that the structure of our language allows for the ignoring of Berkeley's imagined observer,¹ Berkeley has, as a matter of pure linguistics, failed to prove his case. If, however, it can be shown that in one sense of meaning, and that a familiar and important one, the proposition which Berkeley is attacking ("that unthinking things can exist absolutely") is meaningless, that in itself would be a matter of some importance.

Now, it has already been pointed out that it is silly to confuse meaning with the pointing out of objects or the having mental images. Nevertheless it is quite true to say that one of the common ways of *ascertaining* the meaning of object words is by ostensive reference or mental imagery. If a French student had to say to us, "What do you English mean by 'yellow'?" the easiest and most economical answer would be "*jaune*"; but it would be equally effective and legitimate to point to a daffodil, a bowl of custard and a pot of mustard, without uttering a word. Of course the pointing wouldn't be the meaning but the meaning would have been ascertained through the pointing. Similarly, our ability to imagine, in the absence of the objects and events imagined, helps us both to ascertain meaning and to continue our conversation in a meaningful manner. If we do not

¹ Berkeley, it will be remembered, says that when we talk of absent objects we tacitly introduce an imagined observer.

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understand the word "saffron" and are told that it is a kind of yellow, our ability to remember how yellow things have looked to us is a help when we are trying to understand the meaning of the new word. And, of course, as far as those words are concerned which apply to familiar objects our understanding of their meaning in conversation is largely a matter of being able to imagine in absence the objects to which they refer.¹

Now it is clearly this kind of meaning, which is ascertained either directly or indirectly through ostensive reference, that Berkeley was considering. Despite his advocacy of common sense, Berkeley knew that his doctrine was paradoxical and not entirely in conformity with common usage. And he was certainly not propounding points of grammar. Had he been alive to-day perhaps the attempted contemporary analyses of the word "exists" and the implied attack on his logic would have worried him more. But even in the face of such attacks Berkeley could be defended. After all, Berkeley was not primarily concerned (at any rate in the context of the quotation considered in this article) with the analysis of the word "exists" or any attempts to give it a meaning. He was merely concerned to attack those who *were* prepared to talk about its meaning in ways that he considered logically objectionable. Berkeley's opponents are quite prepared to describe the way in which things exist independently of perception, to say that they are, or are at least capable of being coloured, shaped, loud or soft. And it is for this type of philosopher who, when he talks of things existing absolutely means quite simply that there are or could be colours or shapes apart from our perception of them in exactly the same way as there are colours or shapes for our perception when we observe or imagine, that Berkeley's argument is still highly relevant.

Our next step, then, must be to ask why a competent philosopher, such as Berkeley, could consider that in one sense, at least, our words are meaningless when we talk about "the absolute existence of unthinking things." Why is there the difficulty here of deciding whether or not we are faced by a contradiction when usually there is no such difficulty, it being just as simple to pick out a case where a contradiction applies as it is to enunciate the logical principle itself—that a thing cannot be both A and not A?

Some of the difficulties in arguing about ultimate logical principles are obvious. Ever since Kant and the synthetic *a priori* went out of fashion there has been an almost complete lack of sympathy in

¹ I would like to stress here the word "able." Our imagining is far more a dispositional matter, far less an entertaining of concrete images than some Empiricists have realized. Hume, however, realized well enough that words like "government" are not entertained through images but are at the best cashable in terms of them.

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philosophical circles with any attempt to see a difficulty in the application of logic or in its relation to experience. A kind of philosophical Morton's fork will remorselessly divide the arguments offered into either empirical or merely analytic, tautological. Thus, to take the latter first, it will quite cheerfully be admitted that a contradiction is involved in talking of the looks of things which are not looked at, the thought of things which are not thought of and the imagining of things which are not imagined; but Berkeley and his supporters will be censured for trying to make capital out of barren tautologies by arguing from perception to existence. To say of a thing that it is green is not equivalent to saying that it looks green. Professor Dawes Hicks in his book on Berkeley¹ makes a similar point rather more elaborately when he writes as follows:

"Berkeley was clearly entitled to assert that material things cannot be *thought of* as existing apart from a thinking mind. . . . But it is quite another affair to maintain that material things cannot be thought of as existing-apart-from-a-thinking-mind."

It is interesting to note that the words of these two propositions are exactly the same, only the emphasis is different.

If, however, Berkeley and his supporters were to claim that they had unearthed a contradiction of importance which was not merely the reverse side of an obvious tautology, the other prong of Morton's fork comes into play and it is argued that there can only be empirical difficulties about the manner in which things exist and about their characteristics, and that logical difficulties are *a priori* ruled out.

The difficulties of contesting this point of view all essentially stem from the main difficulty of arguing about logic and its application. It is supposed to be a merit of logical argument, and particularly of fundamental logical principles, that they are clear and distinct, needing no persuasion for their acceptance other than their own obvious clarity. The trouble is, however, that there are some philosophers who find various combinations of words such as unseen colour, unheard sound, unsmelled odour, quite unintelligible. Such philosophers put these conjunctions in the same class as round square, white blackness or wise idiot. Other philosophers, and these to-day are in a majority, find no contradiction in the juxtaposition of such words. And it is impossible to find any principle more certain than the principle of non-contradiction which could serve as a touchstone to solve the issue. All that can be done is to follow the advice of J. S. Mill when faced by what he took to be an ultimate principle. Logically unable to present a more ultimate principle for its justification, the best he could do was to present considerations capable of determining the intellect to take up one side or other of the dispute.

¹ *Berkeley*, pp. 127-8, Leaders of Philosophy Series.

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The best way to do this in the present case is to refuse categorically, in considering the problem, to be fobbed off by empirical considerations. There are so many ways in which the argument against the absolute existence of unthinking things can be weakened by an appeal to considerations which prove only a contingent and not a necessary connection between perception and the objects of perception.

Thus all arguments, either for or against Berkeley's position, based on empirical researches into the laws of physics, optics or physiology, have no real relevance to the issue at hand. Again, Berkeley's own suggestion as to why "*esse est percipi*" unless it be modified and very carefully stated is open to obvious objections.

Berkeley, it will be remembered, suggested that the belief in the absolute existence of unthinking things arose from the fact that, in talking of unobserved objects, we ignore the imagined observer who is nevertheless always tacitly presupposed in the mental picture we form of such objects. But, since an imagined observer presumably shares the characteristics of a real observer, it must at once be admitted that there is no *logical* necessity for an observer with the usual empirical characteristics to be present really, in the case of immediate perception, or imaginatively, in our picture of absent objects. There is no logical necessity in the particular constitution of human bodies, and since we do not see the eye when we are looking nor hear the ear when we are listening it is logically possible to conceive of actual perception without the presence of a human body and of imagined perception without the imagining of a human body.

Neither is it satisfactory to say that unobserved objects imply a conscious being to imagine them in the sense in which conscious is understood to mean self-conscious. As Professor Schlick has pointed out¹ "Primitive experience, mere existence, of ordered data, does not presuppose a 'subject,' or 'ego,' or 'Me,' or 'mind,' it can take place without any of the facts which lead to the formation of those concepts." But, when all is said, when it is admitted that awareness of a body, of a mind, of a self, are not necessary constituents of our imagining of absent objects, is not Berkeley right in arguing that the imagining, the awareness itself necessarily remains? Is he not right in saying that we can have no conception whatever of what inanimate objects might be like except through the medium of our awareness of them either directly in perception or indirectly through memory and imagination?

It is not possible to prove, however, that awareness is an essential and not a contingent fact about our ability to describe absent objects or to talk meaningfully about the ways in which they might exist.

¹ "Meaning and Verification," p. 169, *Readings in Philosophical Analysis*, ed. Feigl and Sellars.

Neither can it be proved that circles cannot be square. We can only point out again and again, that it is not a merely contingent fact about ourselves that we learn the meaning of object words ultimately through acquaintance with the objects to which they refer, but rather that this acquaintance is a logically necessary condition for the ascertaining of the meaning of such words. We know what it means for something to be green, ultimately, because we know what it is for something to look green. We know what it is for something to be a sound because we know what it is for someone to hear a sound.

Perhaps the best way for us to, as it were, feel ourselves into this position where we see that there is an insuperable difficulty about the description of inanimate objects when taken to exist *absolutely* or completely on their own, is for us to argue by analogy from our own unconscious states. We regard unthinking things as being analogous to ourselves in states of complete unconsciousness. If, as most of us believe, there are periods of dreamless sleep when thinking and feeling are not going on at any levels then during those periods we regard ourselves as inanimate bodies or unthinking things. But clearly, also, during those periods, no distinctions, discriminations, descriptions or classifications are made. *Existing absolutely we don't exist at all*. If we try to describe what we are like or how we exist during intervals of complete unconsciousness we never describe our *absolute* existence. On the contrary we always describe how we look to other people, how we would have felt had we been awake, etc. In fact our only reason for postulating periods of unconsciousness are, firstly, that *other* people at these times notice a lack of the activities associated with conscious states together with a continuance of our bodily appearance; and, secondly, that we ourselves, on awakening, notice that there has been a gap in consciousness through the observation of such things as the position of the fingers on the clock, etc. But a gap is a negative thing, and neither that nor the observation of other people give us a warrant for saying that we can describe our *absolute* existence as unthinking beings.

Of course, as is so often pointed out in discussions like these, it would seem that there is good inductive evidence for the continuance of our bodies during sleep and if we are embarrassed by human percipients we can always have a camera to take a flashlight picture of us while we lie, sleeping. But as Professor Stace has pointed out¹ it is an odd kind of induction that is not *ex hypothesi* based on observed instances. And even if we waive this objection there is a more serious one to follow. We are throughout considering questions of meaning, of how we can *understand* the existence of unseen, unimagined colours, etc. This being so: questions of fact (whether

¹ "The Reputation of Realism," *Readings in Philosophical Analysis*, ed. Feigl and Sellars.

there are such colours existing) must necessarily depend on our interpretation of the first question. And, after all, a camera photograph, like an eye-witness account, is a reinterpretation in perceptual terms of what we are taking *ex hypothesi* to exist unperceived.

Ultimately, then, whilst various arguments may or may not help a philosopher to feel himself into Berkeley's point of view, there can be no arguments which could conclusively establish it. Since the "*esse est percipi*" if stated in a suitably refined form, claims to be a fundamental principle of meaning, it, like all fundamental principles, cannot be derived from further premises. Ultimately Idealists and Realists (if we must give labels) just disagree as to whether word conjunctions like unseen colour are to be classed with word conjunctions like round square or not. Idealists regard the separation of the "-ing" from the "-ed," the experiencing from the experienced, the discriminating from the discriminated as a vicious and impossible abstraction, possible perhaps as what Hume called a "distinction of reason," enabling us to talk of the one and not of the other, but impossible as an attempt to make us know or guess what objects might be like apart from our awareness of them.

I see no way of reconciling the opposing parties on this issue since the trouble about the type of proposition we have been discussing is that there is by no means universal agreement as to whether or not they include a logical contradiction. It is, however, worth while realizing that there is such a class of statements and that philosophers have been particularly interested in them because they have been, at one and the same time, both controversial and yet undecidable by empirical arguments.

Since, then, after our enquiry, we have only come to the tame conclusion that some people think in one way, some in another, it may be doubted whether the philosophical journey has been worth while. Many admissions have been made *en route* which would seem to be damaging, particularly the admission that the word "meaning" can be used in different ways from the way Berkeley used it and that therefore a sentence which was meaningless to him could be meaningful, in a quite different way, to us. Have we done any more than to point out that, if we will persist in using "meaning" in the pictorial sense in which the meaning of words is ascertained through our sensuous acquaintance with the objects to which they refer, then talk of unperceived or unimagined objects will lead us into contradictions? This would be conceded by many philosophers who, at the same time, would argue that to think or to conceive is not to have a mental picture.

The worthwhileness of the enquiry, I suggest, is based on a two-fold consideration. Firstly, I believe that there are eminent con-

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temporary philosophers who regard propositions about unobserved objects as being meaningful in Berkeley's sense of the word "meaning" and it is, I think, important to point this out. For instance, when Russell writes in his *History of Western Philosophy*¹ of the possibility of "colours intrinsically indistinguishable from those that we see" existing unseen he is not discussing a point of grammar. He is arguing that our awareness, in perception and imagination, of colours is not a necessary precondition of their description, that as far as logic is concerned unseen colours can exist. Again, when Professor C. D. Broad² talks of the unperceived part of a cricket-ball being brown in *exactly the same categorical sense* as is the observed part, he seems to be supporting a similar non-phenomenalistic view. And, apart from these isolated instances, the whole of the article by Mr. Berlin, already referred to, is concerned with insisting on the categorical nature of propositions about unobserved objects together with a rigorous rejection of an alternative phenomenalistic analysis in terms of hypotheticals.

Now in all these cases the issue is not primarily, or at least not exclusively a grammatical or linguistic one. All these philosophers are saying, in effect, that, whatsoever empirical difficulties there may be, there is no logical difficulty in the postulation of the absolute, categorical existence of unthinking things. If Berkeley was right on this particular issue then they are wrong and I think that that is worth pointing out.

But far more important than the views of particular philosophers is the fact that the acceptance of or rejection of Berkeley's argument about unperceived objects can have a considerable effect, one way or another, on our general attitude to metaphysical problems of a certain kind. Clearly the attitude of the anti-Berkeleyites is that, although there can be interesting discussions about and analyses of perceptual situations, there is nevertheless no logical problem about the existence of unsensed objects. In a sense, for such philosophers, there *is* no problem about the external world; a series of half-philosophical, half-scientific problems—yes, but a central logical problem—no. This attitude is in line with an extremely popular mode of philosophizing nowadays, which suggests that only bad metaphysics ever makes a retreat from common-sense ways of thought necessary and that it is the job of good philosophizing to bring us back to common sense.

Now, as I have hinted more than once, Berkeley himself does not help us in any clear manner towards the opposite point of view, since his introduction of God is intended (in the opinion of most

¹ Page 678.

² "Berkeley's argument about Material Substance," *Proceedings of the British Academy*, p. 127, Vol. XXVIII. 1942.

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philosophers unsuccessfully) to get rid of the paradox which his phenomenalism has created. If, as Professor G. E. Moore once suggested, phenomenalist railway trains only have wheels when in stations then Berkeley, in his cruder moments, hopes to give the wheels a more continuous existence, by bringing in a God who looks at them when they are between stations. If, however, we drop Berkeley's positive suggestions and concentrate on the destructive side of his argument, we are, admittedly, forced to the position where we must accept a glaring paradox as being philosophical truth.

To some types of philosopher, however, this would be more of a blessing than it might, on the face of it, seem. Particularly, I think, would philosophers of religion find interest in a renewed approach to Berkeley's problem, though in exactly the opposite direction from that which Berkeley would have wished. Berkeley was particularly anxious to show that God was not entirely a far-off Being, inaccessible to human thought and perception, but that, at least to some extent, He was evident in the immediate phenomena of Nature presented to us in an ordered, intelligent pattern.

Berkeley, of course, regarded God as an infinite Being whose ways were largely incomprehensible to finite mortals. Nevertheless, he thought that we could, by analogy with ourselves, think of Him as an omniscient and as a supreme causal agent.

If this analogy breaks down, however, as I suggest it does, the problem of transcendence comes a good deal closer to earth, and, if I may be excused the paradox, God becomes almost as immediately absent as Berkeley took Him to be immediately present. If we cannot meaningfully talk about objects and events without bringing them or rather keeping them within the context of our perception and our imagination then all unobserved objects, at least all objects which are not at any given moment being contemplated by anyone, cannot be intelligibly discussed.

Thus the problem of transcendence does not merely arise in relation to a Being defined (if defined at all) by non-temporal predicates, but in relation to what we normally take to be immediately contiguous in space and time to our most ordinary experience.

There is no time here to start a discussion on the multitude of philosophical problems which centre round the attempt to talk about things outside the context of our perception and imagination. It is, however, fairly obvious that, for those who find problems of transcendence in philosophical issues which would seem to be of more practical importance than that of perception, an important basis is given to their arguments if the same problem arises in a discussion of the ordinary phenomena of everyday experience. If, in principle, as a matter of logic, we don't know what it is like for something to be,

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say, a chair, existing entirely on its own, it is obviously more difficult still to see how an objective value could exist on its own, irrespective of our approvals or how a God could exist on His own apart from our essentially anthropocentric attempt to conceive, by an illegitimate analogy, the characteristics of a transcendent Being. If to talk of unobserved objects involves a contradiction in terms; if it is rather analogous to the attempt of a player to see himself playing from the grandstand *at the same time* as he is playing the game; then there must be a radical distinction between our ordinary common-sense views about existence and the results to which we are drawn by reflecting on the logic of perception and experience.

In conclusion: an article of this nature must necessarily appear in some respects unsatisfactory since it does not give the decisive, yes-or-no, kind of answer that is usually desired by the questioner. Are sentences about the absolute existence of unthinking things meaningless or are they not? And the answer is both yes and no. We are in a dilemma similar in some ways to that faced by David Hume when he thought he had found a flat contradiction between two equally firmly held natural beliefs.

Grammar, common sense, the structure of our language, all give us strong motives for rejecting Berkeley's claim to have found a contradiction in our talk of absent objects. Particularly does our common sense tend to react violently against Berkeley's paradoxes. It does seem plain stupid to talk as if the whole furniture of heaven and earth, both now and at times before there were any conscious beings at all, logically depended on imagination, perception and thought. It seems even more paradoxical and stupid if we are forced to regard Berkeley's own solution, the introduction of a Divine observer, as being, on reflection, unintelligible.

The temptation, therefore, is very great, to regard the whole problem as bogus. After all, even philosophers like David Hume (a particularly strong exponent of the view that we are in all our ideas confined to the world of perception and imagination), saw no *logical* objection to the existence of unseen colours, unheard sounds, etc. And, indeed, it is extraordinarily difficult, from a common-sense point of view, to see where the difficulty lies. What more simple than to leave a building, forget all about it and yet believe that the building has, in all describable respects, remained unchanged? True, if one is not thinking about the building, the belief must be not actual but dispositional. Nevertheless it can become actual at any moment and is regarded as equally valid, whether consciously actualized or not.

Any attempt to argue against this common-sense point of view must necessarily seem to its adherents to be based on a confusion of mind. It will be said that we have confused a logical truth about

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ourselves with a contingent fact about objects, that objects can exist without being thought of, though we cannot think of them without thinking of them.

To argue against this analysis, which seems to combine both the important attributes of logic and common sense, is a perilous task. But two misunderstandings can be guarded against. Throughout we have been discussing questions of meaning rather than of fact. Therefore it is not true to say that we have arrogantly legislated for the existence of things, allowing them to pop magically into existence only when we or some other finite spirits choose to imagine them or to think of them. We have not, in this article, been guilty of a kind of ontological argument from the necessity of thought to the necessity of existence or vice versa. All that has been argued for has been the necessity of thought for an intelligible understanding of the modes of existence. Against the agnostic position—that the universe is in some inconceivable way greater than our thoughts about it or imaginings of it, but that the nature of this extra-mental universe is inevitably hidden from us—nothing has been said. It is just that Berkeley and his supporters don't know *how* things can be green, square, noisy or sweet-smelling unless they are seen, heard, smelled or imagined to be so. They don't know what meaning to give to the hypothesis that unthinking things have attributes on their own.

This, however, brings us to the second misunderstanding to be guarded against. It is not in every sense that propositions about the absolute existence of unthinking things are meaningless, but the sense in which they can be said to have some meaning has already been discussed and we need not go over old ground again. Suffice it to say that it is here where purely linguistic philosophizing, like patriotism, is not enough. The contradiction which Berkeley has unearthed might not be an obvious one. It might be so unobvious that the very structure of language fails to reflect it. Nevertheless a contradiction is a contradiction, however unusual it may be and however deeply hidden it may be.

Against competent philosophers who just do not see the contradiction, however, I don't think any argument can be of value. Professor C. D. Broad once wrote:¹

"When I look at a cricket ball I take myself to be aware of a part of its surface, and I assume without question that the rest of the surface which I cannot see from my present position is now brown in exactly the same categorical sense in which the part I am seeing is brown. Arguments may be produced to show that this belief is false or highly improbable. But when I am told that I cannot really be believing this, since it is unintelligible nonsense, but must be believing some conditional proposition about what I should be sensing

¹ *Op. cit.*

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under certain unfulfilled conditions, I remain completely unconvinced."

Berkeley thought differently, so did Bradley and many other philosophers.

The aim of this article has been twofold. Firstly, to try to show that Berkeley on this one particular point about the absolute existence of unthinking things has never been shown, by a water-tight logical argument, to be wrong. Professor Broad's conviction is a psychological matter, so was Berkeley's; both of them must find unintelligible nonsense where they are psychologically constructed so to find it. Neither can throw brick-bats at the other.

Secondly, I have tried to show (admittedly in a very sketchy manner) that if one is so constructed as to find talk about unheard sounds, unseen colours, etc., meaningless, then this should have quite widespread effects on one's general attitude towards the existence of things out of the range of thought and perception. Roughly speaking, it should give a great fillip to agnosticism. I do not pretend to have argued this point out but it is, I think, an interesting signpost to further discussions.

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EXISTENTIALISM AND METAPHYSICS

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THERE has been for some years a feeling in the philosophical world in this country that we have had enough of the unproductive working of the treadmill of linguistics and of the new logic and that Metaphysics is at least not criminal, and even justifiable; notable justifications of Metaphysics are Professor Emmet's *The Nature of Metaphysical Thinking* and Professor Barnes' *The Philosophical Predicament*. But what is Metaphysics about? That, it seems to me, is a question which has to be looked into far more carefully than it has been, before we can think of justifying Metaphysics (or, for that matter, of attacking it). "About the Whole"¹ would appear to be the answer which no would-be metaphysician can avoid, however frightened he may be of being sent into a concentration camp by his Ayerian colleagues for giving it. What is this Whole and how is it to be got? Judging at least by most nineteenth-century metaphysics, it would seem that the Whole is some kind of totality (of all that is known or to be known), comparable, save in respect of comprehensiveness, to the totality say which Physics deals with, and that it is got by reflecting on the nature of any knowing (epistemology) and/or on all the branches of knowledge and their relations to each other;² Metaphysics, we should conclude, is a synthesis or construct both crowning, and confirmed by, knowledge. Such a conclusion would gain support from the apologies of Professors Barnes and Emmet, the first of whom speaks of "metaphysical synthesis" and the second of "metaphysical models" (on the analogy of "models" in Physics). But if this is what Metaphysics is, surely it has been exploded long ago by the Logical Positivists. True, these damaged their case by insisting on sense-verifiability as the one and only thing conferring a claim to meaning. But they might have shown that the notion of the Whole gains no support from any particular knowledge, i.e. from any particular judgments, whether based on sense experience or on something else; and that therefore statements about the Whole cannot have meaning at least in the sense in which other statements have meaning. (It might be said

¹ A compilation of passages (non-philosophical and non-theological) in which "the Whole" or its equivalents, "Being" and "Reality" occur is badly needed and would be very instructive. It would show, I think, that these expressions are applied neither to anything in particular nor to everything in general, yet always to what is most important, indeed all-important.

² The Metaphysics which consists of drawing out the implications of the fact that anything is at all is characteristic of the Middle Ages and neo-Thomism rather than of the nineteenth century.

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that Kant had already shown this before the Logical Positivists). The fact is that the more knowledge becomes knowledge (i.e. detailed and exact) the more disintegrative it is, not only of "the Whole," but of any whole with which it starts, i.e. the more it becomes science of nuclear fission. No doubt synthesis and construction have a place in the advance of knowledge. But it can be shown that the kind of whole metaphysicians have in mind is a concrete one which can no more be reached by such synthesis or construction than can, for example, a painting by the reading of general aesthetics or even of particular criticisms of the painting itself. What comes nearest to the sense of the Whole and is very closely connected, if not identical, with it is the sense of oneself as a whole. This latter sense is neither gathered from, nor confirmed by, our knowledge (necessarily piecemeal, discursive, propositional, analytical) of ourselves; it is not a construct or the result of a synthesis; on the contrary, this knowledge dissipates or explodes it, as was shown by Hume in philosophy and Virginia Woolf, amongst many others, in literature. But the significant thing is that it springs up again as fresh as ever after each explosion. Similarly, the significant thing about Metaphysics is that it flourished as vigorously as ever after Kant and will do so again after the blasting of it by Logical Positivism. Furthermore, we may regard as metaphysical, or at least quasi-metaphysical, ritual, myth, religion, art and gnostic or wisdom reflections about "life" (which have always formed the staple of all literature and serious conversation) because, like Metaphysics, they are attempts on the part of man to express to himself, and relate himself to, the Whole, in contrast, and largely in opposition, to his exploration of partial realities (knowledge).¹ Then we must admit that, at least until the advent of Logical Positivism, man spent more than three-quarters of his time metaphysicizing, that *Homo sapiens* was a metaphysical animal; and we understand why Logical Positivism needs to be as loud and aggressive as it is to make him cease even for a moment to be this.² And that is the most significant fact of all.

We may perhaps gain an insight into the true basis of Metaphysics and the source of the indefeasible metaphysical impulse from Existentialism, however irritating always and depressing often the latter may be. What is common to all brands of Existentialism is the conviction that with his *cogitans* and *cogitatum* Descartes

¹ Cf. Cassirer, *An Essay on Man*, and S. K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*.

² Minds which can rest satisfied that mankind has meant nothing by the things which for the major part of its sapiential existence have meant most for it must be very extraordinary and very happy—capable of solving every problem or of seeing none.

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started with an abstraction, and that what philosophy should start with is the living subject and the lived object or reality,¹ that which we contact through our living and contact the more fully the fuller, intenser or more "authentic" our living is. Starting, then, with the living subject and the lived object, we can say that the living subject is neither merely the cognitive subject nor merely the feeling subject nor the conative subject, each of which is an abstraction, nor just all these together, and that the lived object is neither merely the object correlative to cognition nor merely that correlative to feeling or that correlative to conation, each of which is an abstraction, nor just all these together; the lived object is the Whole, that about which Metaphysics is, and the reason why we practise Metaphysics is simply because we are alive, as a means of reminding our cognitive selves that there is more in heaven and earth than is dreamed of in our knowledge rather than as a means of summing up that knowledge,² as a way of protesting that the Whole is rather than of giving an inventory of what it is. Nor need it surprise us that knowledge should dissipate the Whole or make it seem impossible, seeing that it is constantly doing this with subordinate wholes (e.g. a picture or a poem): its operation is summed up by the parable of the centipede which, wishing to have complete knowledge or understanding of the holistic action which is the motion of all its legs, came to the conclusion that this motion was impossible and died of immobility. This need not mean that knowledge is just a distortion or masking: it is true insight into the relations holding between the *parts*. Nor need it mean that there is knowledge on the one hand and the inaccessible "thing in itself" on the other; the "thing in itself" is constantly accessible—in living.

Metaphysical exploration, that which constitutes primary metaphysics, we should then say according to this, is carried on in living; primary metaphysics is the affair not of the theoretic but of the practical reason, or rather of contemplation, not the Aristotelian

¹ It might be objected that "the lived object" is a peculiar object because grammatically it can only be expressed by the cognate accusative. But exactly the same may be said of the *cogitatum* which figures in epistemological Metaphysics. The language can, no doubt, be misleading, but it need not be if we beware against being misled.

² Cf. Unamuno, *The Tragic Sense of Life*, p. 2: "Philosophy answers to our need of forming a complete and unitary conception of the world and of life, and as a result of this conception, a feeling which gives birth to an inward attitude and even to outward action. But the fact is that this feeling, instead of being a consequence of this conception, is the cause of it." The feeling is, no doubt, strongest in the mystical state. Cf., among many, the description given in Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, Book VII, C. IV: "There seemed to be threads from all those innumerable worlds of God, linking his soul to them, and it was trembling all over in contact with other worlds." But mere feeling, it must be remembered, is as much an abstraction as cognition.

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but the mystical contemplation, the creative contemplation whereby we become or live that which we contemplate. This notion has an affinity with the kind of metaphysics Kant set up in his *Critique of Practical Reason* after exploding Metaphysics in his *Critique of Pure Reason*; only for it the Practical Reason cannot be that whose primary concern is "ethics" or "the categorical imperative," nor can Metaphysics consist in postulating or deducing anything, still less anything as formulable as "God, Freedom and Immortality." It is also akin to Plato's conception of philosophy as the conflagration lit by the spark struck by the meeting and union of two lives, except that the life that Plato has in mind is predominantly intellectual; and it takes us back to the original idea of the function of philosophy as the "love of *sophia* or wisdom," wisdom being thought of as concerned with the Whole and our attitude to it rather than merely with the economy of our behaviour. Finally, it can even welcome as an illumination the definition given by Logical Positivism of the function of Metaphysics as exclamatory, provided it be allowed that an exclamation need not be merely a symptom of feeling or of the subjective; that the Whole is and that therefore the exclamation which is a metaphysics can be more profoundly and comprehensively revelatory of reality than all our sciences put together; that there is a significant difference between one exclamation and another, between, for example, the infant's wail which, according to Lucretius, is its comment upon the world on first coming up into the regions of light and Plato's attempt at describing the Form of the Good; also that there can be a "logic" and validity of exclamations.

But this definition of Metaphysics brings us to secondary metaphysics, metaphysics in utterance. This consists neither of induction nor deduction nor of any ratiocination whatsoever but just of description based upon inspection (phenomenology). It may be, for example, the description of the Whole as revealed in the living which is constituted by unconditioned, unlimited or undefeated hope, faith and love (phenomenology *à la* Gabriel Marcel) or of the infinite circumambient Thou revealed in living out the I-thou relationship (Martin Buber); we may call both these descriptions of heaven. Or, on the other hand, it may be the description of the Whole as revealed in the life constituted by *l'ennui* and *la nausée*, that is as the Absurd or Nonsense or (if we interpret aright Sartre's *Huis Clos*) hell. (According to this view Metaphysics is not nonsensical but *about* the nonsensical.)

But obviously there can be as many "revelations" as there are lives or even as there are moods. Are they all merely private and subjective or all shareable and veridical, or some one and others the other, and how are they related to each other and to the Whole?

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These are very difficult questions to answer, so difficult that many consider the existential approach to Metaphysics an impossible one. But the difficulty, though great, is perhaps not insuperable. The many different revelations (or some of them) may be compared to the many different perspectives of the same visual whole, every one of which is shareable, valid and of the whole; while the two opposed extremes, heaven and hell, are not so much different perspectives, as complementary poles, of the Whole. Moreover, if there is no seeing in which, as seeing, all other perspectives are given, there is living which "comprehends" both heaven and hell and other perspectives; this is the tragic living of all-suffering and all-forgiving love (*tout aimer et pardonner c'est tout comprendre*) and is possible for each one of us, so that to overcome the above-mentioned difficulty we need not have recourse, as at first it appears we must, to something like our old friend, the Absolute, a construct or synthesis of the experiences of everyone which is yet not the experience of anyone. The consideration of these questions and the attempt to answer them constitute tertiary or critical metaphysics.

Fourthly, there is the attempt to co-ordinate the worlds of ordinary perception, science, history, etc., with each other and with the Whole. This takes us away from Existentialism, and brings us to what has traditionally been meant by Metaphysics, the synthesis which Professors Emmet and Barnes have in mind in their justifications. With Plato, we may say that the kind of synthesis which the attempt to relate the Whole or the One to the many yields is myth, and that "the truth is something like what the myth states though no sensible man would maintain that it is exactly like that." Such myth is not specifically the product of Existentialism but its use may be said to be "existential" or living. Its use is to inspire and edify, and its truth is a pragmatic one. It can, in the first place, remind us that the Whole is, in spite of our knowledge apparently telling us that it is not, and can send us back to primary metaphysics, the exploration of the Whole by living.¹ In the second place, while reminding us of the ultimate limits of all knowledge, it can prompt us to transcend the limits of existing knowledge, and can inspire ideas that may be applied fruitfully in the sciences, in history, in society and politics; it can unify, however provisionally, contemporary culture so that there can be cross-fertilization between its different parts. The highest praise we can give to this quaternary metaphysics is to say that it stimulates us. But if we want it to do more, or rather less, than this, if we want to treat its statements like those of a science and forget its existential function; if we want

¹ The most valuable contribution of a metaphysical synthesis is just the *frisson métaphysique*. This is neither a frivolous nor a contemptuous remark.

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to treat it as the whole of Metaphysics and neglect its commencement in, and ultimate reference to, primary or existential metaphysics, we shall be doing what Plato says no man of sense will do and will justify the charge of nonsense that has been levelled against Metaphysics.

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DISCUSSIONS

I

JUSTICE¹

SINCE the Middle Ages the philosophy of law has been predominantly an Italian field of study, but though the doctrines associated with the names of Aquinas, Vico, Beccaria, Lombroso, Pareto and others are familiar to many English philosophers, few of them can be aware of the richness of the Italian literature devoted to the subject, or of the importance accorded to it in Italian universities, or of the variety of philosophical schools, Positivist, Thomist and Idealist that have contributed to it. The present translation of Del Vecchio's *Justice* should do much to make this side of Italian thought better known in England, for though it consists only of a very short text each chapter is supported by a vast apparatus of notes in which with much else the wealth of this Italian literature is disclosed. We are in fact given in these notes the contents of a great scholar's card-index relating to the concept of justice with references to more than a thousand ancient, mediaeval, and modern authors. These are embedded in discussions of topics subordinate to the main theme, ranging from patristic arguments concerning the attribution of justice to the Divine Nature to a literary history of the traditional symbols of justice. English scholars will be much indebted to Professor A. H. Campbell of Edinburgh University who has not only edited a fantastically difficult text with great care and supervised the translation (from the general high standard of which the word "potentiating" seems the only serious lapse) but has added a valuable introduction, notes, and occasional paraphrases to guide the reader where divergences between English and Italian legal thought are puzzling. In fact the only criticism of Professor Campbell's edition is that he has been too sparing of such paraphrases: for though, as he says, Del Vecchio's exposition of the thought of others is often distinguished by great lucidity his exposition of his own ideas in the philosophical idiom of Italian idealism is often difficult. As a work of reference and as a literary and historical treatment of its subject, this book is of very great value which I hope the criticisms which follow will not obscure.

The general intention of the book is first to disentangle the specific notion of justice both from the general notion of Morality or Virtue and from the notion of Legality which have both, at different times and in different ways, threatened to absorb it, and secondly to solve what the author terms the "problem" of justice presented by the fact that it bears a double aspect as something by reference to which we criticize laws and also something which consists in conformity with law. The author's first task is, I think, better discharged than the second. There are many shafts of insight such as the contrast between the Roman conception of the *sumum* (*jus suum cuique tribuere*) as something a man can claim, with the Greek conception of *τὸ προσήκον* as what befits a man in accordance with a certain standard. There is an illuminating discussion of the motives which led Plato and others to identify justice and Virtue and so to obscure its specific characteristics and its intimate relation to the concept of law. By contrast the treatment of Aristotle's great contribution to the analysis of justice in the Nicomachean

¹ *Justice*, by Georgio del Vecchio: ed. with additional notes by A. H. Campbell: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 236 + xx, 30s.

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Ethics even with its supporting complement of notes is very unconvincing. Among much that will surprise English scholars two points are prominent. Aristotle is roundly accused in his discussion of "diorthotic" justice of having failed to distinguish between the notion of a punishment for a crime and that of compensation or redress for what we would now call a civil injury (tort or a breach of contract) and so of having confused "public and private law." The view taken by many English scholars that Aristotle is not here discussing crime or punishment at all is referred to only as "the singularis opinio" of Hildebrand. Two passages in the Ethics are quoted in support of this accusation but these, instead of supporting it, merely show that Aristotle in his discussion of "diorthotic" justice refers to adultery, assault, homicide, etc., which were the subject of quasi—private or civil suits in which compensation as for a private wrong could be awarded. The fact that Greek law had not emerged completely from the stage when these wrongs were thought of as primarily a matter for a private suit on the part of the victim or his relations does not in the least mean that Aristotle muddled the two notions of punishment and compensation, or that he was treating the former under "diorthotic" justice. Aristotle is further criticized for failing to derive the various kinds of justice which he discusses "from a single concept." It is true that Aristotle insists on radical differences between the notion of justice or fairness in distribution, in compensation and in exchange, but he also points out many unifying features. In particular, as Jackson's valuable edition of Book V of the Ethics shows, the use of a mathematical ratio or proportion (dismissed by Del Vecchio as of little more than symbolical or analogical value) to express what is just in each of the three cases of distribution, compensation and exchange of goods, is intended to exhibit the common principle that if justice is done men will emerge from each of these three cardinal transactions of civil life with their initial relative positions or equilibrium unaltered. This notion that there is an equilibrium to be maintained or, if disturbed, to be restored is the main unifying feature stressed by Aristotle as lying behind the diverse applications of justice and is surely important.

The second part of the book contains Del Vecchio's own theory and the solution of the "problem" of the double aspect of justice mentioned above. I use the expression "theory" advisedly to convey the fact that more is attempted than an analysis of the meaning or meanings of the word "just" or the elucidation of the criteria by which, when we demand in the name of justice that like cases should be treated alike, we determine what makes various cases "alike" and so in the author's terminology give "content" to a merely "formal" notion. Such an analysis or elucidation might be thought to be all (though it is of course much) that is required to solve the "problem" of the double aspect of justice. But in the idealist tradition, Del Vecchio offers us a Transcendental Deduction intended to demonstrate that justice has a "necessary" content and that this is the principle that individual human beings are entitled simply as human beings to respect, and therefore to equal respect in the pursuit of their own ends. This principle is said to be an "a priori function of the human spirit" and "a necessary truth," "a necessary category of thought," "innate not acquired" and the manifestation of a "metempirical" as well as a "transsubjective" form of consciousness. There is of course much to baffle English readers, now perhaps a little enervated by long habituation to a simpler style of philosophical writing, in the use of these quoted expressions and especially in the apparently unconscious exploitation made of the ambiguities of the notion of necessity; but translated into their own humbler idiom, the Transcendental Deduction appears to consist of the following three steps. (1) Each individual is conscious of his own existence.

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(2) If an individual is thus conscious of his own existence, he must necessarily be aware not only of objects (as critical idealism has always claimed) but must conceive himself both as subject and as an object for other individuals' consciousness. (3) This "objective consciousness of self" whereby the subject self is necessarily conscious of other selves is not only of theoretical value but also of practical value for from it "results" an inter-subjective "co-ordination of selves" and the notions of parity and reciprocity between them. Professor Campbell warns us that the Italian word "*conscienza*" sometimes is equivalent to our "conscience" and sometimes to our "awareness" or "consciousness"; but even allowing for this it is difficult to understand how this attempt (never made by the inventor of the Transcendental Method) to derive *practical* principles from "the fact that the subject is self-aware" can bridge the chasm opened by Hume between knowledge of what is and knowledge of what ought to be done. Even if our recognition of the existence of others in some sense is presupposed by our "self awareness," how does this show that we must treat them equally rather than unequally?

The Transcendental Deduction is an important step in the author's argument and cannot simply be peeled off from the rest of the text by the reader who is doubtful of its validity because it is used by the author to *disprove* the sceptical thesis that in the application of the formal principle of justice that like cases are to be treated alike, what we use as our criteria of similarity shifts and varies with many factors. But for the purposes of further criticism the author's argument can be treated as one concerning the meaning of "just" "justice" and "acting justly." So regarded, his doctrine is that to treat people justly *is* to recognize that they have claims simply as individuals and in the first place what they have a claim to is liberty or non-interference in the pursuit of their own ends. Human beings are in Kantian terms each "subjects of ends" (or in Del Vecchio's words, "absolute principles of their own acts") and those laws are just which will secure equal rights in the sense of an equal maximum degree of liberty to pursue those ends. Liberty as well as equality is therefore on this view an essential constituent of the notion of justice. Having so defined justice, the author also seems to think that this same principle of respect for the human person as such explains not merely the negative duty to respect the liberty of others but nearly all the cases where we speak of persons having claims or rights or having obligations or duties, including the positive obligations to keep promises, to repay services rendered, and the obligation of the individual to the community or political society that has nurtured him. Two comments seem appropriate on this extension of the notion of justice to cover this wide range of obligations or duties. First, there are surely many obligations, of which the obligation to keep a promise is one, which are independent of the notion of justice. We do not often speak of keeping a promise as just or breaking it as unjust and here the English language marks a distinction of importance which the wide extension of the notion of justice would obscure. What perhaps suggests the contrary and is often a cause of confusion in discussion of justice, is that (quite apart from the law) we do often speak of it being just to make and unjust to refuse reparation for wrongs done, e.g. by a broken promise, and indeed for any wrong arising from neglected duties or disregarded rights. What makes the use of the word "just" appropriate in such cases is that the reparation for such wrongs is conceived as restoring an initial order or equilibrium constituted by the structure of rights and duties. Secondly, if we are to speak of the distribution in a society of benefits or evils or of the allocation of official positions or of rewards for services as just or unjust, it seems clear that the justice of such distributions cannot be derived from the

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single principle of respect for human personality which Del Vecchio claims to have deduced. His argument that they can be so derived seems to be that if different individuals are of equal value, then if one of them "acts in a given way to others" this renders just (as a "virtual authorization") "a like acting." But this seems scarcely enough: perhaps such a notion of "virtual authorization" in conjunction with the general principle of equal respect for individuals as such would explain why we should not *complain* of others treating us as we have treated them, for if we are consistent in our principle that individuals are as such to be treated alike, what we do to others may be done to us. But the same principle does not show that others *must* do to us what we do to them when we treat them well. To bridge this gap between the negative duties of respect for the liberty of human beings and the positive obligation to repay good services an independent notion of *merit* is surely required. Certainly the proper award of public office, which Del Vecchio also regards as a matter of justice, seems only very remotely connected with the principle of equal respect for human beings and dependent on the distinct notion of *capacity* for the discharge of a function.

Such considerations show that justice is either far more complex than Del Vecchio allows or more purely "formal." Capacity, merit, and the value of the human individual are notions independent of each other but are all, if anyone is, part of the meaning or essence of justice. But reflection on our ways of talking about justice and its relation to our general moral outlook suggests that it is a mistake to treat it as more than a "formal" principle which requires that whenever there are competing claims they shall be satisfied *pro tanto* by the impartial application of rules defining the rights of the claimants by *some* appropriate or relevant criteria; what will count as an "appropriate" or "relevant" criterion will vary not only with the type of issue to be settled but with the general moral metaphysical or religious outlook. Hence if we find persons disregarding or blind to the value of the human person as such and, e.g. supporting gross inequalities on the basis of a sincerely held doctrine of "natural slaves" to stigmatize them as unjust would be misleading, not merely too weak: it would suggest wrongly that such persons were unduly influenced by private or particular interests and not impartial, whereas they may be none of these, e.g. if they are slaves themselves or mere spectators of the system. Neither Aristotle nor Plato connected the notion of justice with the liberty or value of the individual as such (though Del Vecchio does vaguely suggest that such an idea was present in Aristotle's distributive justice) for their moral horizon was dominated by the notion of capacity for a function; whereas we in considering, e.g. the justice of a system of legal rights, treat as of paramount importance the mere fact that as human beings individuals are alike. It is misleading to present this difference as a different conception of justice, for it is a difference of moral outlook concerning more than the notion of justice though it determines a difference in the criteria used in its application.

Finally Del Vecchio's discussion of economic justice shows also that the notion has a far more debatable penumbra than he allows; economic justice is for Del Vecchio a matter of regulating the distribution of wealth only as "a natural extension of the person" and the only connection he sees between justice and the satisfaction of human needs, is that it requires that everyone should be freely educated and supplied with the implements of work "so that no one should be excluded from productive activity." In his view "to each according to his needs" is no more than a pious aspiration towards universal prosperity and cannot express a genuine rule of justice since there is not a sufficiency of goods for the needs of all and "it cannot be affirmed *a priori*

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that one's need constitutes a sufficient title to claim from others what belongs to them." The line drawn here seems very arbitrary; if the notion of justice is to be extended from the principle of equal respect for the liberty of human beings so as to require that everyone should be given education and the tools of a trade in order to enable him to function as an individual, then surely the same principle might easily demand that men should be supplied with the basic necessities of life if they stand in need of them. Of course the proviso "so far as economic resources permit" will apply in both cases; but the transition from a merely negative application of justice to one in which in its name positive steps are taken to secure that human beings are equipped with the means of self-development, show that the notion has scarcely the hard outline which Del Vecchio attributes to it.

The book ends with an appendix on the basis of penal justice which is full of thoughtful and humane reflections. In the author's view the application of the notion of justice to a penalty for a crime and the retributive theory of punishment associated with it is a mistake bred of the primitive confusion between the notions of reparation and punishment and he advocates in its place the extended application of the techniques of rehabilitation, and more serious consideration of the requirement of justice that the criminal should, so far as he can, make reparation to his victim for the injuries inflicted.

H. L. A. HART.

THE NATURE OF A MORAL DUTY

The discussion by Mr. W. J. Rees of the nature of a moral duty (*Philosophy*, January 1953) contains much that is thought-provoking (and, in my own case at least, otherwise provoking also) on the old topic of "objective" and "subjective" theories of duty. In this note I propose to deal with one point only; a point to which I attach the more importance because the complaint I have to make relates to no mere idiosyncrasy on the part of Mr. Rees but to a more widespread habit of thought. I find the same fault in Mr. Hare's paper at the 1951 "Joint Session" (Arist. Soc. Sup. Vol. XXV) where I should hold it responsible for the fact that, while much is there said that is true and important, the essence of the problem nominally under discussion at that meeting has really been elided.

What I deprecate is the extent to which attention is concentrated on the nature of moral *rules*: and in the case of Mr. Rees, as I think, some misconception of the problem under consideration in his article, and more particularly of the import of the subjective theory, is caused by (or is implicit in) this emphasis. It looks as though Mr. Rees held that the use of "ought" in a moral sense is always to promulgate a moral rule; or if he is not supposing this in at least the particular passage to which I shall refer I do not see how his argument there would have even the plausibility that it does have. But surely this is just not the case. If a man says "I ought to do so-and-so," meaning that his here and now duty is to do it, he is not laying down a rule of conduct. It is no doubt arguable that a rule (if you care to call it so) is implied; namely the rule that *any* man placed in a precisely similar situation ("situation" including, of course, the man's own character and abilities) ought to act in the same way. But certainly this is not what is being *said*. Nor, anyhow, is it a rule in the sense of "rule" intended by Mr. Rees. The rules that Mr. Rees cites correspond to what Ross originally called "*prima facie* duties" as contrasted with "duty proper" or "actual duty"; whereas when a man acknowledges his here and now duty it is "duty proper" that he means, and he means *his* "duty proper," not an obligation resting on people generally. The "I" of his "I ought" is of the essence of his meaning; but surely whenever we are promulgating a rule the correct form is rather "One ought" or "People ought."

Consider now the "fallacy of fundamental significance" that Mr. Rees finds in the argument supporting what he terms the "ethically subjective" view, the view that a man's *moral* knowledge or ignorance is one of the factors determining what his duty is. "If knowledge of a moral principle were itself a ground of obligation, then we should have to include it among the conditions stated in the protases of the hypothetical propositions into which a moral rule may be analysed. If this were done, the rule that a person ought to honour his parents would then have to be interpreted to mean, among other things, the following: If a man's parents are lonely and he knows this and can visit them, and if he knows that when a man's parents are lonely, etc., he ought to visit them, then he ought to visit them. No moral rule can be analysed in this way" (p. 50). Mr. Rees goes on to make clear the absurdity of the analysis, and I fully agree with him that it is absurd. But it is an absurd analysis of a *rule*, and to insist on the absurdity does nothing to shake the subjective theory if the "ought" of subjective duty is *not* an "ought" of rule. And it isn't. Let us grant that we should never issue a rule, a club rule or any other, with the addition

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"and this rule applies only to those who think it a good rule"; still, this does not prevent its being the case that any rule we do promulgate, such as "Members shall intoxicate themselves not less than once in every week" (which, however deplorable in substance, is formally beyond reproach) *can in fact* be *conscientiously* obeyed only by those who think it proper to obey. And this, and neither more nor less than this, is what the subjectivist has in mind when he says that a man's convictions as to what is proper or improper determine his duty. He is holding that "is my duty" and "is something that I cannot conscientiously do" are mutually exclusive characterizations of an act. When Luther said, "I can do no other," he meant "I cannot, *in conscience*, act otherwise" ("for to act against our conscience," as he himself observed in the same context, "is neither safe for us nor open to us"). And if, instead, he had used the words, "This is my *duty*, and until I can see that you are in the right of it, my duty it will remain," we should have understood him equally well and understood that he was making the very same point.

It is worth noting that in thus making the existence of a duty depend, *inter alia*, on ethical convictions one is not saying that the ethical convictions themselves are of that purely *general* nature which would be expressed as moral *principles*. The operative conviction is a conviction about the moral quality of a *particular* act. There is a sense, therefore, in which it is open to us, without prejudice to the subjective theory, to agree with Mr. Rees when he says (p. 51): "Intelligent adults do not derive their duties from the prior acceptance of certain moral principles; on the contrary, they derive their knowledge of moral principles (in some way which need not here be determined) from their knowledge of their moral duties." I see nothing in these words inconsistent with the subjective theory; and if Mr. Rees considers that they are inconsistent with it, I presume this is because he regards "thinking a certain act right" and "holding a certain moral principle" as equivalent expressions. In fact, however, they do not refer to the same thing, however intimately related, "in some way which need not here be determined," are the two different things to which they respectively refer.

I recognize, of course, that Mr. Rees's position as a whole is much more complicated and subtle than my criticism has indicated, and in particular that he himself allows, later on, a *sense* in which knowledge of moral principles *can* be a ground of obligation. But whatever the merits of his contention at that stage (and I do not find it easy to interpret) it is certainly not intended to rehabilitate the subjective view, and it does nothing to save the particular argument against that view with which I have here been concerned.

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PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

GERMAN PHILOSOPHY

UNTIMELINESS¹ (*Unzeitgemässheit*) characterizes certain German philosophers. It arises from an uncertainty, common among the Germans, about their relation to space and time. The "people without space" are also a people without a present. They may live in the past, the future, in all time, or in the timeless. Hegel absorbed the past, Nietzsche probed the future in his "untimely reflections," Nicolai Hartmann lived with problems which he regarded as timeless and unchanging. Hartmann was a truly "untimely" philosopher. He was a first-rate professor of philosophy, excellently trained in the Marburg school, very methodical and disciplined, gifted with a sharp-sighted intellect, enormous will-power and unbounded capacity for work; an excellent teacher, exercising a dominating academic influence and making most valuable contributions to the history of philosophy, to specific philosophical problems, especially to the analysis of categories, and to Critical Realism. Nevertheless, he got out of touch with his time. Living "in the presence of centuries," he attempted the construction of a philosophical system on a scientific basis, in the line of Aristotle, Kant and Hegel, at a moment unpropitious for such an undertaking. His last book, *Teleologisches Denken* (De Gruyter, Berlin) may be recommended as an excellent example of his method. It attacks the category-mistake implied in the notion of finality, analyses this concept, and allows only a regulative use of teleological thought. *Nicolai Hartmann, Der Denker und sein Werk*, edited by H. Heimsoeth and R. Hess (Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, Göttingen), represents, with its fifteen contributions and with its comprehensive bibliography, a memorial worthy of his personality and work. R. Heiss' sketch of Hartmann's personality and the protocols of a Seminar on cleverness and wisdom (1933) are especially interesting. Hartmann's contributions to ethics are sympathetically appraised in P. E. Mayer's *Die Objektivität der Werterkenntnis bei Nicolai Hartmann* (Westkulturverlag).

Paradoxically Heidegger too is untimely, in spite of the fact that he, and not Hartmann, represented the German *Zeitgeist* between the wars. His *Einführung in die Metaphysik* (Niemeyer, Tübingen) publishes, with slight alterations, a course of lectures delivered in 1935. It may be recommended to all those who want a relatively easy introduction to his metaphysics, which, however, is not the promised new one, but the old one. This metaphysics is untimely, because it centers in the Greek problem of the essence of being, which in opposition to becoming, semblance, thought and obligation (*Sollen*) is determined as constant presence: *ὄν* as *οὐσία*. In the end we are again where we were some thousand years ago, and the final claim, that the formulation "Being and Time" replacing the old problem of "Being and Thought" opens up new vistas, remains unfulfilled. The book confirms that the problem of being is *not* the central problem of contemporary metaphysics. Heidegger forgets to ask, whether his questions concerning being are the right ones. "Is 'being' a mere word and its meaning nebulous or the spiritual fate of the Western world?" There is no answer to this question because it is based on a false alternative.

¹ I call a philosophy "untimely" if it is based on beliefs which are no longer credible, but contradict common sense and contemporary scientific knowledge. "Untimely" should not be confused with "unfashionable." A philosophy may be timely and nevertheless opposed to the fashion of the day. Similar problems arise concerning some religious beliefs.

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Franz Brentano's *Grundlegung und Aufbau der Ethik* (Francke, Bern) is valuable as the first elaborate publication of Brentano's ethics, based on his lectures. The *Husserliana* Vols. IV and V (Nijhoff, Haag) publish for the first time *Ideas* II "Phenomenological Investigations concerning the problem of constitution," and *Ideas* III "Phenomenology and the Foundations of the sciences." *Ideas* I was published in 1913. These excellently edited volumes are of the greatest interest to any serious student of Husserl, especially to those who accept his problems as genuine, namely the constitution of the object in consciousness in general, and the construction of regional ontologies of nature, of material objects, of the soul, of the world of persons, and of the mind in particular. Others may be excused if they ask: are these problems genuine and timely? "That there must be a rational psychology, whether we have it or not, is self-evident." "The phenomenology represents a considerable part of it." Who is prepared to accept these claims? Was not Husserl's reluctance to publish these parts perhaps due to his own doubts? "The Influence of Meinong in Anglo-Saxon Countries" is discussed by J. N. Findlay in *Meinong-Gedenkschrift*, published by the Philosophical Seminar of Graz University (Styria, Graz).

Offener Horizont, Festschrift für Karl Jaspers (Piper, München), published on the occasion of his seventieth birthday, contains many valuable contributions. José Ortega y Gasset's "Fragments from a 'Birth of Philosophy'" discusses the origin of philosophy among the Presocratics and holds that philosophy arose as the methodical revelation of truth. The papers of the psychopathologists R. Gaupp, H. W. Gruhle and R. Rosa are of special interest for assessing the influence of existentialism in general, and of Jaspers in particular, on psychopathology. A comprehensive bibliography of Jaspers' publications is added. Sartre exercises a considerable influence in contemporary Germany, especially through his plays and novels. Recently *L'être et le néant* has been translated in a shortened version as *Das Sein und das Nichts* (Rowohlt Verlag, Hamburg). Seeing that Sartre is extremely difficult to translate, this translation is helpful as an interpretation and on the whole reliable. Among other parts the phenomenology of the human body is omitted, which in France and Belgium is regarded as one of its most interesting chapters and which has already influenced psychopathological studies. The French have a feeling for the reality of the body which the Germans lack. The translator, Julius Streller, has published, as a kind of commentary, a short introduction to Sartre's philosophy under the title *Condemned to be free* (Meiner, Hamburg). With the help of copious quotations he describes, in an indiscriminating mood, the chief concepts of Sartre's philosophy, not omitting its obscene aspects.

Existentialism still dominates the philosophical discussion in Western Germany. The present vogue is, however, distinguished from the first one in that it is influenced, positively and negatively, by French existentialism, especially by Sartre, and by Catholicism. The following books confirm these facts. J. Lenz, *Der moderne deutsche und französische Existentialismus* (Paulinus Verlag, Trier) is noteworthy because it combines the official Catholic attitude to this movement, as expressed in the encyclic *Humani generis*, with a rather personal and penetrating analysis of the German and French authors and with sober criticism. Lenz rightly remarks that Jaspers is not a Christian existentialist, rejects the prevailing German Heidegger-cult, states that Heidegger's enormous claims have so far only produced a Babylonian confusion of language, and opposes the Catholic Heidegger school. L. Gabriel's *Existenzphilosophie. Von Kierkegaard zu Sartre* (Herold, Wien) is by far more ambitious, discursive and reflective. He stresses that existentialism is neither a system, nor a doctrine, nor a set of theses, but a

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specific manner of asking questions. These writers are, somewhat arbitrarily, interpreted as searching, like the Presocratics, for first principles, and therefore called *Urgrunddenker*. The discussion is often interesting, but needs to be checked by reference to the sources. Gabriel's critical remarks are valuable, e.g. that Heidegger's thought is closed to the Infinite, and that his treatment of language and knowledge is inadequate. H. Knittermeyer's *Die Philosophie der Existenz. Von der Renaissance zur Gegenwart* (Humboldt Verlag, Wien) is a most comprehensive history of this movement from the renaissance to the present day. It is reliable and sympathetic in its treatment, but non-selective, not always essential, and somewhat disproportionate. Jaspers gets 42 pages, Heidegger 112 pages, in spite of the fact that his philosophizing turns out to be "sagendes Vorfragen" (an uttering of preliminary questions). Heidegger also dominates L. Landgrebe's *Philosophie der Gegenwart* (Athenäum Verlag, Bonn), who by no means discusses contemporary philosophy, but the problems of man, world, nature, history, art, knowledge and being, from the point of view of Heidegger's philosophy. His book reveals the relativity of the term "contemporary." Whereas Landgrebe views the present position as a replacement of positivism by existentialism, W. Stegmüller defends the opposite thesis in *Hauptströmungen der Gegenwartsphilosophie* (Humboldt Verlag, Wien). His final and most comprehensive and substantial chapter is devoted to Carnap and the Vienna Circle. The book may be recommended as informative and objective.

The following contributions to the history of philosophy have reached us. Hans Herter, *Platons Akademie* (Gebr. Scheur, Bonn) defends Usener's thesis that Plato's academy was the first great centre of the mathematical sciences, and that it was of great importance for the furtherance of a system of sciences. Hermann Gauss' *Handkommentar zu den Dialogen Platons*, I, 1 (Herbert Lang, Bern) is an introductory volume to a commentary on the "real," i.e. the mature, Plato planned in six volumes, and contains a general introduction to Platonic Philosophy. This work owes its unique position in the Plato-literature to the fact that the author, a Swiss professor, has been converted to Anglicanism in general and to the Anglican Platonism of Archbishop Temple and Dean Inge in particular. Gauss holds that true philosophy should still be Platonic. In a rather awkward manner Theodor Ballauff combines Heidegger's interpretation of Plato and Jäger's great work on *Paideia* in his booklet *Die Idee der Paideia, Eine Studie zu Platons Höhlengleichnis und Parmenides Lehrgedicht* (Westkulturverlag). He interprets the allegory of the cavern as an authoritative description of the idea of Paideia. Etienne Gilson und Philotheus Böhner, *Geschichte der Christlichen Philosophie* I (Schöningh, Paderborn) is a second edition of the first part of a history of Christian Philosophy, based on Gilson's lectures, but elaborated and supplemented by Böhner. It is an introduction to Patristic Philosophy. A new assessment of Locke's epistemology is attempted by Alfred Klemmt in his book *John Locke, Theoretische Philosophie* (Westkulturverlag) on the basis of a fundamental distinction between thinking (*Denken*) and knowing (*Erkennen*). The problem is genuine in so far as it concerns the relation between the theory of ideas (*Essay*, bk. II) and the theory of knowledge (*Essay*, bk. IV). "Thinking" is, however, according to Locke, not "having of ideas," as Klemmt assumes, but "perceiving" of ideas. And since there are three kinds of perceiving, namely, perceiving of ideas, perceiving of the signification of signs, and perceiving of the relation of ideas, the distinction between thinking and knowing is not so fundamental. The philosophy of law and of society of the father of the German social democratic party is discussed by Thilo Ramm in *Ferdinand Lassalle als Rechts- und Sozialphilosoph* (Westkulturverlag). That universalism, freedom

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of thought and intellectualism (i.e. love of method, analysis, and synthesis) characterize French thought is Emile Callot's thesis in *Von Montaigne zu Sartre* (Westkulturverlag), a rather systematized history of French philosophy. Jürgen von Kempski's *Charles S. Peirce und der Pragmatismus* (Kohlhammer) is the first German monograph on Peirce and may be warmly recommended because of his sober and scholarly discussion of Peirce's pragmatism and logic. The well-known writer Rudolf Pannwitz publishes two books, *Der Friede* and *Der Nihilismus und die werdende Welt* (Hans Carl, Nürnberg), the last one a collection of essays and lectures. Vrijo Reenpää attempts a justification of Kant's epistemology in *Der Verstand als Anschauung und Begriff* (Finnish Academy of Science, Helsinki), adapting it to recent research.

As a document of an upright philosopher who courageously opposed Nazism as well as Bolshevism, and consequently lost his position twice and suffered imprisonment, the late Hans Leisegang's *Meine Weltanschauung* (de Gruyter Berlin) is of special interest. It is a paper, which he, like the other University teachers of philosophy in Jena, had to write in 1947 within four weeks, on the instigation of the East German authorities, revealing his world-view and his attitude to Marxism. It draws the balance of his life and work, and represents a significant document of our time. *Habent sua fata philosophi*. A work of the well-known late French philosopher Lavelle is translated under the title *Die Gegenwart und das Ganze* (Schwann, Düsseldorf). This translation is welcome. In opposition to Sartre's mistrust of reality and of human nature, Lavelle bases his philosophy on trust and on participation in Being which is always present. We cannot find self-realization except in an act which transcends the limitations of our finiteness. Hugo Dingler, one of the most interesting German philosophers of science, pursues his operational interpretation of physics in *Das Physikalische Weltbild* (Westkulturverlag). The change going on in contemporary Western democracy is discussed in an interesting manner by Gerhard Leibholz in a lecture *Der Strukturwandel der modernen Demokratie* (C. F. Müller, Karlsruhe). His thesis is that a democracy, dominated by a party, differs essentially from the old liberal representative parliamentary democracy which it has replaced.

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Sri Aurobindo and the Soul Quest of Man. By NATHANIEL PEARSON. (Allen and Unwin, 1952. Pp. 127. Price 10s. 6d.)

This book is a study, or rather a disciple's exposition, of the first twelve chapters of *The Life Divine* by the late Sri Aurobindo. Though little known in this country, Aurobindo is regarded by Indians as a philosopher of the first rank and his influence is probably as widespread now as that of Radhakrishnan or Bhattacharya. It is a commonplace that in Indian thought philosophy is indissolubly bound up with religion, and although this view is not strictly accurate—since there have been sceptics and materialists in the East as well as the West—it is certainly true of Aurobindo, for whom philosophy is not only an intellectual but also a profoundly spiritual discipline. Thus his work embodies, as Professor D. M. Datta puts it, "a spiritual technique for the uplift of the human race." But whereas in Western attempts to combine philosophy and theology we usually find philosophy geared up to a purely sectarian revelation, in Aurobindo's system the religious background is universal and transcendent of all particular faiths—which is one of its great merits.

Nevertheless, Aurobindo's Vedantic idealism, though revitalized and freed from much of the ancient lumber, is hardly likely to commend itself to Western philosophers. They will be bemused by its luxuriant terminology and consider its vast and complicated ontological superstructure to rest on highly dubious epistemological foundations. One wonders, for instance, what the average Westerner, assuming that he has been brought up in the empirical tradition, will make of the following. "As in the Cosmic Consciousness, so in the Transcendent we come to see that whereas Matter and the physical universe constitute the basis of the Manifestation, pure Spirit which at first appears to obliterate all material reality is in fact the detached origin of cosmic action, from which the action itself is guided and sustained. From this standpoint we see that the ultimate Beyond is no blank negation or infinite zero, but is indeed a supreme Wisdom and Intelligence, the Lord of all the universal activity, whose very Spirit has entered into and permeates the multiplicity of Creation even to the minutest particle—centre of it—whether of atom, cell or soul. And even one's own petty action can be seen to be ultimately the sanction or tolerance of a Supreme Will, and not merely the direct result of any personal or collective effort. The Supreme (or Brahman of the ancients) is the eternal guiding Power, the ever-present and all-pervading Reality" (p. 58). There are affinities here with Neoplatonism, of course, but to-day it is not unreasonable to demand a logical analysis of obscure concepts and high-sounding phrases before agreeing to accept them as significant.

Another point is that the highly spiritualized way of life, which Aurobindo's system appears to enjoin, seems only suitable for those who are willing and able to spend their lives in an Ashram (as Mr. Pearson has done for the last six years). For those who have to earn their living at a factory-bench, or by teaching undergraduates philosophy, the spiritual pace would be far too exacting. Still, if anyone feels inclined to take a glance at modern Eastern thought, he cannot do better than buy this book; for however queer the views expressed may appear to the Western mind, they at least represent, for an apparently influential section of Indian opinion, a refined and purified version of ancient philosophical truth.

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Mr. Pearson writes well and seems to have thoroughly absorbed Aurobindo's views; and he manipulates the formidable mass of "other-wordly" terminology with dexterity and precision.

J. HARTLAND-SWANN.

Butler's Moral Philosophy. By AUSTIN DUNCAN-JONES. (Pelican Books, 1952. Pp. 192. Price 2s. 6d.)

This book, appearing appropriately on Butler's bicentenary, fills a gap in English ethical studies. Its purpose is "to expound and criticize Joseph Butler's ethical doctrines and to pursue further some of the questions Butler raised." I agree that the *Sermons*, like Aristotle's *Ethics*, are specially suitable to this double method.

The author goes systematically through the main points of Butler's theory of human nature, emphasizing naturally the status and relations of conscience, self-love and the passions; all of which he rightly calls the most fundamental part of Butler. In this exposition he introduces various distinctions (such as *occurent*, e.g. hunger, and *continuant*, e.g. ambition, passions) which should be of help to the student in finding his way through the intricacies of ethical debate. Another chapter deals with the place of God in the ethics, and rightly stresses that Butler's characteristic ethical teaching is non-theological. God is there to see that "all shall be set right at the final distribution of things." The remainder of the book treats of several general problems that arise out of Butler's work, e.g. obligation, desert, moral judgment.

Confining this review to the first part of Professor Duncan-Jones' purpose, I find his interpretation always careful and usually correct. He rightly emphasizes the distinctness of conscience and self-love, and the authority of the former; his development of the notion of "intrinsic stringency" as an exposition of Butler's view that the presence of a moral quality is always a reason for a course of action is very attractive. But I cannot agree with him when he follows the "Broad-Taylor" tradition in calling the "cool hour" passage "contrary to the tenor of his writings" (p. 114). This view rests, in my opinion (see my article in *PHILOSOPHY* for October, 1952), on an inadequate appreciation of Butler's distinction between discerning what is right and doing it, which occurs as early as his letter to Clarke in 1717 (*Gladstone*, II, p. 359).

Again, the author with some doubts thinks (p. 181) that Butler "would have to hold that their (i.e. conscience and self-love) opposition is only a logical possibility, of which there are no actual instances." Now Butler often (e.g. II, pp. 13, 47, 50, 55, 60, 65, 110, 155, 185, 188, etc.) suggests that "cool" self-love and conscience conflict, so that if "cool" is equated with "real" and opposed to "supposed" as is done by Duncan-Jones and others and by Butler himself when stressing the differences of self-love and the various passions (e.g. II, pp. 19, 34, 35, 41, 43, 87, 139, 189), it is difficult to reconcile Butler's views with the other well-known places (e.g. II, pp. 63-5, 30, 33, 38, 79) in which he insists on the "coincidence" of the dictates of conscience and "real" self-love. I believe (*ibid.*) that in the second set of passages Butler has implicitly defined "real" self-love in terms of its results (i.e. to my interest), while accepting the truth (which "is implied in the notion of a good and perfect administration of things") of the proposition that conscience always advises what is to our interest. On the former definition of "real" self-love "there are actual instances" of conflict, on the latter there is no "logical possibility" of such since it would be self-contradictory. And hence Butler advised men to follow conscience rather than cool self-love, since the former ensured happiness while the latter did not (e.g. II, pp. 55-6).

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There are two points on which Duncan-Jones seems definitely mistaken. He says (pp. 61-2) "the requirement—that self-love should be enlightened by knowledge and good judgment—he seems entirely to have overlooked." On the contrary, Butler uses the ignorance of man as a reason for trusting conscience rather than self-love; he devotes *Sermon XV* to the question, and his express remarks on it are frequent (e.g. "there are numberless cases in which, notwithstanding appearances, we are not competent judges whether a particular action will upon the whole do good or harm" (II, p. 188, cp. pp. 13-14, 221, etc.). Secondly, although Duncan-Jones is correct in saying that Butler does not believe there are any inherently bad principles in men, his view that Butler failed to recognize "real ill-will" seems not to take note of the lengthy treatment in *Sermons VII* and *X* of the fact that men "will and can be wicked with calmness and thought; we see they are" (II, p. 113, cp. pp. 16, 69, 107, 109, 112, 146-7, 149, etc.).

But none of these errors of interpretation suffices to injure the merits of this pleasant, clear, and logical work.

ALAN R. WHITE.

A History of Philosophy. By FRANK THILLY. Revised by Ledger Wood. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd. 1952. Pp. xx + 658. Price 40s.)

In his preface to the revised edition of Professor Thilly's history of philosophy Professor Wood of Princeton University draws attention to the objectivity and impartiality manifested in the work. This objective attitude has been retained; and the result is a good straightforward one-volume history of philosophy which should prove useful to students. I doubt if one could call it an entertaining work. But it seems to me to be a reliable, sensible and clear statement of the opinions of the successive philosophers. And I imagine that students will find it of considerably more practical utility as a source of information than some impressionistic survey which tells the reader more about the author's personal reactions than about the opinions of the philosophers dealt with.

A certain amount of fresh material has been added in this revised edition, chiefly, of course, by Professor Wood himself but in the case of some sections by other writers. For example, there is a new section on Nietzsche by Professor Walter A. Kaufmann. Professor Wood has added material on Kant, existentialism, modern positivism, German phenomenology, "recent British realism" (including Moore, Russell and Whitehead) and recent American realism. New material has also been added in the earlier parts of the work, and a number of sections have been rewritten. Bibliographies have been brought more up to date.

While I hold no brief for dialectical materialism, it seems to me somewhat odd that it receives only one very brief mention, in the section entitled "Hegelian Schools." "What was once rational, Marx reasoned, becomes irrational in the process of evolution: private property, which was once right and rational, will be superseded and overcome as a result of the dialectical-logical process of history." Surely Marxism is of sufficient importance to merit more attention than this, especially when some twelve pages are devoted to Hegel. As for existentialism, exception might be taken to the broad statement that "existentialism is a philosophy of disillusion and despair" and that it is a "philosophy of nihilism which literally reduces all human endeavour to naught." This may be true of some brands of existentialism; but the term "existentialism" is a portmanteau word, and a statement which is true of one brand of it may not be true of another brand.

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Some statements might be reconsidered; for example, the statement that Aristotle's work *On the Soul* consists of eight books. And the bibliographies might, perhaps, be again revised. For instance, there is a later and much better edition of Gilson's work on Aquinas than the 1924 edition mentioned. It is true that the large new edition is so far available only in French; but in the same bibliography the French title of a work by P. Rousselot (called Rouselot through a misprint) is mentioned, though there is an English translation. I have noticed one or two omissions in the index. Thus Carnap's name does not appear there, though he is mentioned in the section on recent positivistic tendencies. But these are minor points, of course, and do not affect the general merits of the work as an excellent and useful text-book.

FREDERICK C. COPLESTON.

Philosophic Thought in France and the United States. Essays representing Major Trends in Contemporary French and American Philosophy.
Edited by MARVIN FARBER. (University of Buffalo Publications in Philosophy. 1950. Pp. x + 775. Price \$7.50.)

The first part of this work consists of eighteen essays by French philosophers, followed by "An American Reaction to the Present Situation in French Philosophy" by Professor R. McKeon. The second part contains eighteen essays by American philosophers, followed by "Reflections of a French Philosopher on the Preceding American Essays" by Professor A. Lalande, author of the well-known *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie*. Some of the essays are mainly descriptive, like Robert Campbell's paper on existentialism in France since the Liberation or Professor Edel's account of some trends in American naturalistic ethics. Others are predominantly expositions of the authors' own points of view, like René Le Senne's paper on "*La philosophie de l'esprit*," Louis Lavelle's "The Three Stages of Metaphysics" or Felix Kaufmann's "Basic Issues in Logical Positivism." At the end of practically all the essays there is a selected bibliography. There was to have been a contribution on the philosophy of science in France by Professor Gaston Bachelard; but as he was prevented by accidental circumstances from writing it, Professor Lalande contributed instead a bibliography of relevant works.

There is, probably inevitably, some considerable overlapping, though this remark applies, I think, more to the French than to the American essays. Thinkers like Sartre, Marcel, Blondel, Bergson and Maritain are discussed in several places. But their several contributions to philosophy are by no means always evaluated in the same way. For example, while in the opinion of one writer Bergson's philosophy exercised a "visible liberating influence," in the opinion of Professor Cornu it is "the ideological expression of the decadent bourgeoisie." If M. Cornu's standpoint was not already clear from this remark, it would be sufficiently indicated by saying that he now holds a chair in the university of Leipzig. Again, while for Professor Duméry Maritain is, in a complimentary sense, "first and foremost a logician," the logical tradition which he represents is elsewhere criticized as being too closely associated with a specific ontology in which no distinction is made between the process of speech and the process of thought and which is "impervious to the understanding of anything outside the pre-established framework of language."

Whichever set of papers one takes, the French or the American, one will, of course, discover considerable differences in philosophical outlook. In spite, however, of internal differences the two sets of papers clearly represent two philosophic traditions, manifested in different idioms and approaches. Perhaps

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one can say that the French philosophers are inclined to expound and teach a philosophy, while the American approach is far more analytic and exploratory. It is also far less metaphysical. At the same time, as Professor Lalande notes of American philosophy, the French reader will be struck by "the important role played by the names of philosophical parties or tendencies." In present-day France "one hardly finds philosophical parties with a fixed doctrine, except for Thomism on [the] one side and dialectical materialism on the other." Positivism in France has ceased to be a dogma, or even a religion, as it once was, and has come to mean "a certain mental complexion" which is compatible with a great variety of attitudes. "No one would dream of discussing it as a fixed doctrine." In American philosophy, on the other hand, we seem to find a kind of General Election in progress, with the representatives of pragmatism, instrumentalism, naturalism, critical realism, new realism, Thomism, logical positivism and what not, busy soliciting votes.

America is prolific in synoptic volumes of this sort, and some people question their value. Their criticism is certainly understandable; but the present work can doubtless serve a useful purpose if it helps to introduce French philosophy to American readers and American philosophy to French readers. In his Foreword Professor Farber expresses the hope that the book will lay the foundation for further study and clarification. In my opinion both the Americans and ourselves have something to learn from modern continental philosophy. On the other hand some of the continental philosophers might profit by giving some serious attention to linguistic analysis.

FREDERICK C. COPLESTON.

A Study in Memory. By E. J. FURLONG. (Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1951. Pp. vi + 106. Price 12s. 6d.)

Professor Furlong's main purpose is to carry further the discussion, to which he has already contributed an article in *Mind* (vol. lvii, January 1948), of the justification for our reliance on memory. In that article he followed Mr. Harrod in holding that it is possible to construct an inductive argument by which to demonstrate the reliability of memory by an appeal to experience, while suggesting certain modifications of detail designed to meet the obvious objection that any such argument, assuming as it must at one or more points the reliability of memory, is necessarily circular. Now, it appears, he no longer believes that it is possible to avoid this circular appeal to memory, and falls back on the contention that the argument in support of the reliability of memory, even if it must itself rely on memory and indeed on a principle of induction, is in no worse case than the argument for the reliability of any other informant.

In his second thoughts about Mr. Harrod's application of the hypothetical method of science to a philosophical problem Professor Furlong is surely right. But the matter can hardly rest there. He has brought it to the point where it is necessary to face more boldly than he does the question to which he often refers: whether the problem has been correctly formulated. There are indeed, as he points out, questions about memory which can properly be treated by the hypothetical methods of science, viz. such questions as whether something which I seem to remember did actually occur, or whether A has a better memory than B and if so why. But the propriety exists, not because these are *like* scientific questions but because they *are* scientific questions—questions of fact or of biography or psychology. Such particular questions need to be distinguished much more definitely than Professor Furlong distinguishes them from the general question concerning the bearing of memory on the validity

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of any thinking process whatever. A and B are informants, and their memories may properly be tested by the methods appropriate to the testing of the reliability of informants; memory is not an informant and there comes a stage in the discussion where this metaphor is a source of real embarrassment. The trouble is in part that the memory which is involved in every argument is not precisely the same as the memory which is tested when I try to satisfy myself that I really did lock the door last night, or that A has a better memory than B: it is more like what Kant called the Transcendental Unity of Apperception—the way in which thoughts hang together to constitute a single process of thinking out a problem. But more important is the fact that the doubt about the reliability of memory as such is a *general* doubt, like the Cartesian doubt of the reliability of sense-perception. Such general doubts, as Professor Furlong's own discussion so well shows, cannot be solved by methods appropriate to particular problems. They can only be treated philosophically, that is, shown to be unreasonable by showing that doubt of the reliability of memory, no less than an argument to prove it, must rely on memory. Memory, that is to say, is not an informant but a kind of knowledge, reliable though not infallible; and its reliability is not a hypothesis but a presupposition of hypothetical or any rational method. Professor Furlong mentions both the possibility that general doubt of the reliability of memory is a bogus doubt and the sorts of consideration by which this could be shown and the doubt removed. But the mention is preliminary and incidental: he does not appear to see where his own arguments are leading him.

Similarly, in the two chapters devoted respectively to the psychology of remembering and to our apprehension of pastness, Professor Furlong seems only half conscious of some of the problems raised by his discussion, or by the terms in which it is carried on. (Neither Professor Ryle's nor Mr. Woozley's discussion, Professor Furlong tells us, was available while his book was in preparation.) We must not complain too much of the sketchy treatment accorded to the distinction between memory as a disposition or capacity and remembering as the exercise of such a capacity, and to the relations and differences between remembering *that* and remembering *how*. But the notions of "memory-image," of "imaging or reproducing," of "belief" and of "proposition" all cry out for an elucidation which they do not receive. And while it may be fair to say that pastness is not a quality it is confusing to have it explained by contrast with fiction (p. 94). The discussion of this topic leans too far towards Berkeley and away from Broad, maintaining no consistency between the accounts of temporal relations as given in the specious present and as inferred in memory. The result is to assimilate memory wrongly to the purely inferential reconstruction of the past by a detective or historian rather than to the perceptual experience with which, as Professor Furlong sometimes recognizes, its true affinities lie. It is hard to take seriously the suggestion that we regard events as past because, while there is no room for them in the present, the spontaneity of the imagery in which they are presented forbids us to think of them as fictions. This seems to be one of the unfortunate results of an incautiously wholesale rejection of the theory that it is the past itself which is remembered. Why not, if it is the past itself which is speciously present?

Professor Furlong's little book, then, is far from saying the last word on its important subject. Do the above criticisms amount to the complaint that it ought to have been much longer than it is? This is, I confess, a feeling which I have not been able to resist. But short as it is the book contains useful, if inconclusive, discussions of various theories, such as those of Reid, Moore, Stout and Harvey, in which memory is represented as a direct acquaintance with, or knowledge of, the past, and some illuminating examples illustrating

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the discussion of the psychology of remembering and the concept of the past. Moreover, it is interestingly, and in detail clearly, written. It might with great confidence be recommended to the general reader who wants a readable introduction to the problems, or to the student who can be relied on to put two and two together for himself.

D. R. COUSIN.

Plato's Phaedrus. Translated with Introduction and Commentary by R. HACKFORTH. (Cambridge University Press. 1952. Pp. 172. Price 18s. net.)

Professor Hackforth's edition of the *Phaedrus*, which is similar in form to his edition of the *Philebus* published in 1945, will be valuable both to the philosophical student, who will be glad to have a clear account of the background to the argument, and to the Greek scholar, who will find that new light is shed on many disputed passages.

The relative date of composition of the dialogue is still a problem, and Professor Hackforth does not claim to have solved it. It is obvious, and is now generally accepted, that the argument at more than one point presupposes the *Republic*. The majority of scholars think that it follows fairly soon after the *Republic*; hence there arises the question of its priority to the *Theaetetus* and *Parmenides*. Professor Hackforth does not think that any decisive evidence on this point has been brought forward. He is inclined to assume for the *Phaedrus* a date about 370 B.C. I offer, with a hesitation equal to his, a few comments on this proposal. First, would it not require us to ascribe a rather heavy programme of writing to Plato at this period? The *Phaedrus*, *Parmenides*, *Theaetetus* and probably also *Cratylus* will all have to be assigned to the three or four years previous to Plato's second visit to Sicily. Secondly, Professor Hackforth seems to assume too easily that the *Phaedrus* is prior to the *Sophist*, perhaps because he gives too much credit to the "stylistic evidence." I should be prepared to maintain that the reference to division and collection in the *Phaedrus* presupposes the fuller account of these processes in the *Sophist*, and in that case the *Phaedrus* is later also than the *Theaetetus*. Thirdly, since in the myth of the *Phaedrus* Plato uses information which he in all probability derived from Eudoxus, the chronology of the travels of Eudoxus and of his residence at the Academy should be considered in relation to the date of the dialogue, though the one subject is almost as mysterious as the other. Lastly, the complimentary reference to Isocrates must belong to a time when the two schools were amicably disposed to one another (cf. Jaeger, *Paideia*, vol. 3, p. 185) and our object should be to date these intervals of friendship, rather than to look for a polemical reference by Plato to some writing of Isocrates.

Scholars formerly used to ask whether love or rhetoric is the main subject of the *Phaedrus*. Professor Hackforth says, "I think it is helpful to ask for the purpose rather than the subject, and I believe there are three purposes, all important but one more important than the others. They are: (1) to vindicate the pursuit of philosophy, in the meaning given to that word by Socrates and Plato, as the true culture of the soul. . . . This I regard as the most important purpose. (2) To make proposals for a reformed rhetoric, which should subserve the ends of philosophy and adopt its method. (3) To announce a special method of philosophy, the dialectic method of Collection and Division, and to exemplify this both positively, in the two speeches of Socrates, and negatively, in the speech of Lysias." It is perhaps open to doubt how far Plato meant to dwell on the second of these points. Formally, he does

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indeed in the last part of the dialogue sketch the requirements of an art of rhetoric; but his principles could not be applied, unless I am reading him too literally, to the art of addressing an assembly, and what he really does give is an admirable justification of the system of individual oral tuition. In his exposition of the passage 274*b*–278*b*, Professor Hackforth says: "The coincident testimony of our present section and of Epistle VII reveals his deep distrust of the written word as a medium of philosophy, whether moral or metaphysical—moreover, and here again the two sources confirm one another, the deepest truths can only be communicated through the long-lasting association of a mature mind with one less mature, a 'sowing of the living word in another's soul'." But is it true that the two passages confirm one another? Is the living word in the *Phaedrus* anything more than the wisely spoken word, as opposed to the written word which all may read and misunderstand? And is not the "spark" of Epistle VII rather an intuition which even the spoken word can never convey? It depends in part on the exact sense of *ῥητόν* at 341*c*. Later, at 344*b*, Plato says that words and illustrations and helpful questioning all merely prepare the way for the kindling of *phronesis* in another mind. (The living speech is defined at *Phaedrus*, 276*a*, as "the original of which the written discourse may fairly be called a kind of image.")

The translation perhaps errs on the side of colloquialism. The contrast between the lighter passages of dialogue and the more solemn speeches is well marked, but the English is probably more informal in style than Plato's Greek would have appeared to be to contemporary readers.

D. J. ALLAN.

Readings in Ethical Theory. Selected and edited by WILFRID SELLARS and JOHN HOSPERS. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. Pp. x + 697. Price \$5.00.)

This is a valuable source-book for recent and contemporary ethical theory. It consists of forty-six articles and extracts from books by Russell, Moore, Field, Frankena, Ewing, Sidgwick, Prichard, Ross, Strawson, Santayana, Dewey, Perry, White, Campbell, Broad, Barnes, Ayer, Carritt, Stevenson, Falk, W. Sellars, Aiken, A. K. Stout, Hospers, H. D. Lewis, Paul, Balfour, Williams, Feigl and Kneale, together with a bibliography. Experienced students of the subject will, inevitably, find a few items they would have preferred to add or to omit; but in general the selection seems to me well done. The professional philosopher will find it worth while to look through this book for good things he might otherwise have overlooked. The unprofessional philosopher, if he reads the book through (quite a formidable undertaking), will become acquainted with all the important ideas and arguments put forward in the English language in the twentieth century by academic moral philosophers of the analytical kind. No Thomist, Marxist or Existentialist approach is represented, and there is only slight examination of the Freudian.

The items are grouped under eight headings. I am not convinced that this arrangement is helpful. It confuses the chronological sequence, splits up the more systematic theories and so does them rather less than justice, and suggests a greater independence than actually exists between the answers one gives to different questions in ethics.

In the main, it is one continuous intellectual enterprise which is here epitomized. It begins with definite and dogmatic types of ethical theory, intuitionist or utilitarian, proceeds to the emphatic denials of positivism, and ends with various compromises which admit some justification for both kinds

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of theory, while abandoning most of what seemed to make either of them worth asserting. The movement of thought has its own internal logic; but it also has some correspondence with the changing moods of the communities in which it took place. Certainly, we have gained from it greater understanding of the nuances of moral language and the snags and pitfalls of ethical argument. Whether we are thereby equipped to cope more clear-headedly with our own moral problems, or even to interpret more accurately the moral affirmations of other men, is a question not so easily answered.

C. H. WHITELEY.

Religion in the Modern World. Essays by various authors. Foreword by LOUIS ARNAUD REID. (London: Allen and Unwin. 1952. Pp. 110. Price 7s. 6d.)

It is impossible to do justice to a small book which contains contributions from Viscount Samuel, Dean Matthews, Canon Raven, Sir S. Radhakrishnan, R. H. Thouless, Sir Wilfrid Garrett and Father Corbishley, in any brief review. The lectures were sponsored by the London School of Religion, and subsequently published in the *Hibbert Journal*. They now appear in book form. Viscount Samuel bluntly transfers the problem of evil from God to man. "Let us not find scapegoats for our own errors." Dr. Thouless shows that the common psycho-analytic thesis that religion is based on unconscious desires and hence false, is a *non sequitur*. Father Corbishley has accomplished the difficult task of saying something fresh about mystical experience. Dean Matthews, after considering the assumption made by most religious people that religion has not reached its final formulation, ends with the remark "We must not lose sight of the possibility that a religion may have uttered its final word and have nothing more to say." That, however, could scarcely apply to Christianity in view of the words "When the Spirit of truth is come He shall guide you into all the truth." Sir S. Radhakrishnan at least does not share this view, for he declares that "A living religion is always growing." Canon Raven wishes that on the subjects of birth control and divorce, Christians could be "reasonably tolerant." He quotes a maxim of his father that the wisdom of a committee is in inverse proportion to the number of wise men who constitute it, adding that long experience of committees inclines him to accept that verdict as not entirely wide of the mark! Sir Wilfrid Garrett rejects the notion of a Christian economics, but holds that there is a Christian attitude to economic issues, which is incumbent upon the Christian. Such brief excerpts as these are in no sense an account of the contents of this book, but they are at any rate samples of its quality and of the many topics of interest it raises.

E. S. WATERHOUSE.

Reflections on Life and Religion. By Sir JAMES BAILLIE. (London: George Allen and Unwin. 1952. Pp. 288. Price 16s.)

When Sir James Baillie died in 1940, he left to the University of Leeds twelve large volumes of miscellaneous reflections which he had accumulated for nearly fifty years. They were there as he had written them, in chronological, but in no other order, and his will directed that they were to be left for ten years after his death and then any part of them thought suitable might be published. Sir Walter Moberly and Professor de Selincourt have been responsible for this volume of selections. They have wisely not attempted to "edit," there is no Contents and only a brief Introduction, but they have gathered together the miscellaneous contents into three broad sections: religion, human nature and conduct, and the world and our knowledge of it. The

arresting character of the opening sentence of the book is typical of the whole. "Wonder is reverent ignorance: superstition is ignorant reverence." Here are a few samples taken at random—"Nonconformity, in some of its forms, is Christianity without manners: conformity, in some of its forms, is manners without Christianity." "There is perhaps no better way of finding out a man's real nature than by ascertaining what makes him unreservedly happy." "There is an exhilaration in a just war, like nothing else. It gives men an opportunity to act like devils in the name of God." "One of the profoundest truths of Christianity is that all a man can do 'of himself,' unaided by a divine power, is to do wrong." "So many people nowadays want to find good reasons for being bad." "There is a certain sanity in unbelief: it is the critical attitude towards fixed dogmas, which rests on the fundamental claim that life is much richer than any particular statement about it." The last sentence of the book is as wisely epigrammatic as the first. "The Englishman takes anything seriously if you try to deprive him of it, and nothing seriously if you do not."

Let not all this suggest that there is nothing in these pages beyond clever aphorisms. The bulk of the book is given to the discussion of religious, moral and political issues, yet always in a brief form. Few extend beyond a couple of pages. This is not because the treatment is very superficial, but rather because the writer's interests here are centred in the practical and not the theoretical aspect of thought.

The attraction of these pages is that one can pick up the book and read where one opens it, finding always some thoughtful and suggestive remarks on topics which are of broad human interest. Enough is said to start one thinking and never more than that. It can truly be said to be a book which leads the reader to think on beyond what it says, to agree, sometimes disagree, with it, but almost always to want to go on for one's self with the question upon which interest has been roused. To say that is perhaps to give the highest praise the author would have desired. One of his epigrams is "Forgive the dead: it is one of the few things that you can do for them." But not the only one. We can remember them with gratitude and for this wise and witty legacy, we shall remember Sir James Baillie.

E. S. WATERHOUSE.

Avicenna's Psychology. An English translation of *Kitāb al-Najāt*, Book II, Chapter VI, with Historico-Philosophical Notes and Textual Improvements on the Cairo edition. By F. RAHMAN. (London: Oxford University Press, Geoffrey Cumberlege. 1952. Pp. 127. Price 12s. 6d.)

According to Mohammedan reckoning, this year marks the passing of a thousand years since the birth of Avicenna (b. 370 A.H.). And the occasion has given a deserved impetus to the study of this great Persian philosopher who exercised such influence on the thought of medieval Europe. A congress in Bagdad in his honour, the readiness of the Iranian government to publish the Persian manuscripts, the patronage of UNESCO given to works concerning him, the aim of the Arab States to further a critical Arabic edition of his works, including manuscripts not already published, all witness to an intention to make his work better known and appreciated.

At Cairo work has begun on the editing of a critical text of the *Shifā'* (*The Book of Healing*), his most important work. For a final text of the *Najāt*, as Mr. Rahman says in his preface, it would be useful to establish first the text of the *Shifā'*; but, meanwhile, he has supplied us with an English translation of that part of the *Najāt* in which Avicenna deals with the various traditional

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problems of Psychology—the soul, the internal senses, the faculties; immortality, origin and unity of the soul; the active intellect, etc. In so doing the translator has rendered very great service to non-Arabic students who are interested in the personal thought of Avicenna. The *Najāt* partly summarizes, partly contains extracts from the *Shifā'*. The translation is not accompanied by the Arabic text; the Cairo edition is used as the basis, but there is an appendix containing the suggested improvements to this edition taken from the various other manuscripts consulted.

The writings of Avicenna, says Mr. Rahman, often lack exact formulation of expression and are wanting in elucidation and detail. Nevertheless the chapters read easily in smooth English. And prior to the notes given at the conclusion of the text there is a useful summary of the contents of each chapter. There is, too, an introduction of some twenty pages on the main elements of Avicenna's Psychology.

Though Avicenna commented on Aristotle, and though he was quite prepared to accept much from his predecessors, he gives everywhere evidence of a more profound insight into some of the problems; and when he defends what has been defended before, one finds him using personal arguments of his own construction. The notes help us to see the historical developments that so often prepared his thought. Interesting especially is the discussion on "The Soul as Substance and as Ego" (pp. 12-19), indicating Avicenna's stress on self-consciousness and unity as characteristic of mental life, elements, so Mr. Rahman maintains in spite of certain texts, not fully brought to light by Aristotle. This element of reflection is found strongly emphasized afterwards in the Psychology of St. Thomas as the essential element in the operation of a spiritual faculty as distinct from sensation. St. Thomas also accepts the theory, found, too, in this work of Avicenna's, of the way in which the animal faculties assist the soul, emanate from its unity and exist for its end. The hierarchical structure of faculties is much more developed in Avicenna than in Aristotle. However, as St. Thomas had rejected the one active intellect, and further the absence of intellectual memory as too Platonic, so, too, would he have rejected, I think, that remark in Chapter XI: "when the soul becomes perfect and strong . . . it isolates itself absolutely in its action, and the faculties of sensation and imagination and all the other bodily activities divert it from its activities." In spite of his defence of the self-reflecting power of mind of man, it still remained for him the form of the body and that fact necessitated some sense aid in every operation. Illustrative of this is, perhaps, the greater stress he seems to lay on the *vis cogitativa*, the faculty in which the operations of sense and intellect are united. This is the faculty well discussed by Mr. Rahman, that Avicenna calls *wahm*, referred to by Goichon as "une trouvaille avicennienne" or, at least "un approfondissement extrêmement important d'une pensée d'Aristote" (*La Philosophie d'Avicenne*, p. 83).

As is necessary in such a work reference is made to Professor Gilson's *Les Sources gréco-arabes de l'augustinisme avicennisant*. One or two differences of opinion appear. According to Mr. Rahman, Avicenna wished to prove not only, as Gilson seemed to think, the incorporeality of the human soul but also its substantiality and this primarily in the famous example of the "man in the void"; and when he attributes substantiality to animal and plant souls he would have been confusing the Aristotelian primary and secondary substances. Gilson's account of the *intellectus acquisitus* as a duplicate of the active intelligence is, he says, based on an incorrect Latin translation.

May one venture a comment on what seems to be a personal opinion of Mr. Rahman (though, in the context, it may be only a rejection of the particular ideas of Alexander of Aphrodisias)? He says (p. 6), "the two ideas of the soul,

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however, namely that of an inseparable 'enmattered' form and that of a subject which accepts different qualities and attributes, do not seem to be reconcilable." It would seem that if we are to explain and reconcile the diverse elements of human life, the necessary link between man and the material universe and the spiritual nature of his higher tendencies and operations, it is to some such conception that we must come; that of a spiritual entity which is truly, yet not merely, the form of the body, linked with matter, yet not totally "immersed" in it.

R. MOLONEY.

Roger Bacon and His Search for a Universal Science. By STEWART C. EASTON. (Oxford: Basil Blackwood, 1952. Pp. 255. Price 25s.)

In the later periods of the Middle Ages and in the centuries of the Renaissance, Roger Bacon was looked on as an alchemist and magician. In recent times he has been accepted as the prophet of experimental science, a forerunner of his great namesake in the seventeenth century. Indeed, he has been regarded as a more penetrating seer than Francis Bacon, for he recognized the importance of mathematics in the task of understanding the world. Mr. Easton adopts a more balanced historical approach to the work of the doctor mirabilis than these judgments presume. He seeks to comprehend Bacon within the intellectual context of the thirteenth century. In order to understand the sequence of his inquiries, from the early *Quaestiones* (circa 1245) to the *Compendium Studii Theologiae* (1292) the author undertakes a close scrutiny of the circumstances in which the works were composed. The book is primarily biographical. All the evidence bearing on Bacon's career and on the development of his interests is examined, and the conclusions of former scholars, such as Charles, Little, and Steele are carefully weighed. Mr. Easton investigates many delicate problems. Among them are the consequences of the prohibitions on the teaching of Aristotle, and Bacon's relations with contemporary scholars, particularly with Grosseteste, Adam Marsh and Richard of Cornwall. These matters are thoroughly explored, and the intricate questions relating to the chronology of Bacon's writings are examined at length. Students of scholastic philosophy will find in this volume interesting accounts of the courses in the Faculty of Arts at Oxford in the early thirteenth century, and of the philosophical position in Paris about the year 1240.

It is not, however, until the penultimate chapter that we reach a description of the universal science of Roger Bacon, and that chapter is all too brief. In the preceding chapters the development of the vast scheme in Bacon's mind is exhibited in detail. Mr. Easton puts weight on the resentment that Bacon felt by his lack of theological training. He became imbued with the ambition to approach theology by a new path, by a mastery of all the sciences. His earlier writings on natural knowledge are ill-informed, even by the standards of his time; he is often credulous on points that Albertus Magnus treats with judicious caution. The only field in which he seems to have made some original observations was the field of optics. The rest of his knowledge he acquired from immense reading and from the reports of natural inquirers. Of his weak manner of reasoning, his vehement prejudice, his consuming jealousy and his conceit, Mr. Easton gives sharp instances. The magnificent scheme that formed in his mind, soon after his return from Paris about 1250, overrides all these considerations. The inspiration sprang largely from a reading of the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum Secretorum*, from which Bacon learnt that the complete system of the sciences had formerly been revealed to the patriarchs. It is likely that the vision also arose from the impact of the recent translations of Aristotle's works on natural philosophy. Twenty years of unceasing labour,

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during which he wrote a number of treatises on various divisions of the system, led to the great works of synthesis, the three *Opera* and the *Communia Naturalium*.

Mr. Easton's account of Bacon's scheme of the sciences is limited to a sketch of the principles that he assumes, but never clearly stated. This outline of his conceptions is presented with very few references to relevant passages in the works. The philosophical issues of the schoolmen, the problems of matter, of universals, of individuation, of the plurality of forms, to all of which Bacon made interesting contributions, are passed by. Indeed, Mr. Easton dismisses the attempt of Raoul Carton (and, I suppose, of many other authorities) to establish Bacon as a philosopher in his own right. But the reader must be warned that he will find nothing in this chapter concerning the details of even the scheme of the sciences; nothing about Bacon's mathematical proposals, his remarkable inquiries on the radiation of forces, his penetrating researches in the field of optics, his discerning hints at the elements of chemistry. Mr. Easton's sketch is confined to some general features of the scientific system that Bacon projected. He brings out the following points. Bacon holds that the cosmos is an ordered whole, interrelated by purposive forces. This scheme of forces is known, partly by revelation, partly by *scientia experimentalis*, the science of experience, the task of which is to confirm by careful observation the truths of revelation. Empirical tests will distinguish the divine scheme from old wives' tales and superstitions. Understanding of all the parts of the scheme must be related to the end of Christian salvation. Accordingly the system of sciences leads into moral philosophy. In order to bring the sciences within the scope of the supreme science, Bacon lays particular emphasis on the task of a synthetic science which should co-ordinate the discoveries of the special inquiries and relate the system to the science of moral and theological wisdom. Mr. Easton's sketch is useful, but it provides little information about the range and character of Bacon's scientific ideas. The book is a biography of the great friar, not an assessment of his work. In its intention of placing Bacon in the framework of the events and thought of his age, it undoubtedly succeeds.

M. H. CARRÉ.

History of American Psychology. By A. A. ROBACK. (New York: Library Publishers, 1952. Pp. xiv + 426. \$6.00.)

This interesting survey of the history of psychology in America is divided into four parts. Part I traces the development of psychological studies in the pre-scientific phase which lasted from the early colonial days to near the end of the nineteenth century. Part II is concerned with the age of the transition from philosophy to science. Part III reviews the vast fanning out movements in the development of the "Schools." Part IV is a single chapter on the "Growth of Branches." The volume is of more than local interest; for the history of American Psychology is all but a history of the science of psychology itself. America has made psychology a subject peculiarly its own, and psychology is to-day, in the main, what the psychologists of America have made it. True enough, the theory of mind is very much older. For this we can go back to Aristotle, even to the pre-Socratics. It is also true that the experimental study of mental facts has its origin in Europe. But psychology to-day is not just the theory of the mind, nor is it merely an experimental study. Among the distinctive qualities of the modern science are the elusive qualities, easier to feel than to define, in the American attitude to life. In this book the describable facts are admirably presented and the elusive qualities happily displayed.

It is commonly supposed that psychology in America began with William

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James; and there is little that Dr. Roback has to tell us which throws any serious doubt upon this supposition. It is, of course, true that from the early colonial days there has been a continuous and a growing interest in psychological problems. Rummaging in the academic attics the author has brought to light a mass of entertaining material. There are Harvard records of bachelor theses dating from 1642 on the soul and its functions. The doings and saying of many "personalities" are recorded—mostly clergymen with administrative talents who rose to high office in the centres of learning. "Prior to James and Hall it was customary for the professor of philosophy to teach psychology, *ex officio*; and the professor of philosophy was usually a clergyman. . . . There were some sixty odd more or less productive psychologists in the United States during the period between Jonathan Edwards and James McCosh. More than thirty of them were administrators."¹ These men were almost always men with scholarly minds, but they were at best scholarly students of the works of European teachers. They did not contribute in any important way to the advance even of the philosophy of mind. It was not, in fact, until 1840 that a text-book entitled *Psychology* made its appearance. This was from the pen of Frederick Augustus Rauch, a work introducing German thought into America. Of greater interest, and more original, was a long-titled and long-winded work by James Rush (1865) which can be not unplausibly claimed as the first expression of the behaviourist trend of thought. Rush suggested that "mind consists in perceiving, thinking, speaking and acting." Our favourite stereotype of the American as one who is more interested in action than in thought is also encouraged by the fact that in the period under review more treatises on the Will were produced in America than anywhere else in the world. The fact, then, remains that psychology in America, as we know it, begins with William James. More strictly, it begins in the last two or three decades of the nineteenth century, and with three or four men among whom James stands out not as a towering intellect but as a towering personality, as a humanist and as one who showed that psychology could be not only a science but also readable literature. James added some of the characteristic qualities of American psychology to those derived from the European tradition, blending the mixture by the catalyst of his own unique personality. A new dynasty arises in the persons of Stanley Hall, Ladd, Baldwin, Cattell, Munsterberg, and Titchener. If one man had to be singled out as the first to display the distinctive American spirit in psychology in its purity, a case could be argued for selecting Stanley Hall. Hall was, to begin with, a child of his country, not a cosmopolitan nor a displaced person. Though the first American student in the laboratory at Leipzig his style was in no way cramped by the domination of Wundt. If he learnt the genetic method in this school, he applied it with a wider human vision than his teacher. He was not overawed by academic tradition, and nothing of psychological interest was for him beneath the dignity of university studies. By research at the "periphery" of his subject he greatly expanded its frontiers. His work stands up well, better than that of some more famous, to time's revaluations.

By the end of the century a distinctive psychology was firmly established in the United States. The rest of the story is one of continuous expansion, a story of the rise and fall and the interaction of schools. We are still too close to the events to discern all the significant trends; but one, at least, is clear. American psychology has expanded in "depth" as well as in range. No one to-day could repeat: "Les Américains, ils ont des laboratoires impressionnés—

¹ In this the United States is not, of course, distinctive. Philosophers have often in Britain assumed high administrative posts. Have we not had a philosopher as our Ambassador to the United States. This is only in accordance with the recommendation of Plato.

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mais de psychologie. . . ." It is, perhaps, true that American psychologists have been generally less disposed than others to gnaw continuously the bones of ancient unsolved, possibly meaningless, problems. It is perhaps true that American psychology has had to work out of its system the anti-metaphysical bug, but signs are in evidence that the bug is almost entirely out. The American psychologist will to-day go as far as anyone else in the analysis of the fundamental concepts of his science. Of this there is plenty of evidence in Dr. Roback's book. As might have been expected, interest in philosophical issues has revived chiefly through the more objective of philosophical studies, logic and methodology. This is illustrated by the logico-deductive system of Hull, and by the wider interest in "operationism," and in semantic questions. There is also a gingerly approach to a reconsideration of the more suspect philosophical concept of "purpose," and there is even a willingness to take another look at Neo-scholastic thought.

American psychology *did* begin with James, but James is now left far behind. What survives most is his spirit and personality, the scientific virtue of unquenchable curiosity and the belief that in psychology nothing is unacademic, nothing is unclean.

C. A. MACE.

The Christian Challenge to Philosophy. By W. H. V. READE. (S.P.C.K., London, 1951. Pp. xiii + 194. Price 13s. 6d.)

Submission in Suffering. By H. H. ROWLEY. (University of Wales Press Board, Cardiff, 1951. Price 12s. 6d.)

The Supreme Identity. By ALAN W. WATTS. (London: Faber and Faber, 1950. Pp. 204. Price 12s. 6d.)

Mr. Reade, of whom Mr. Cyril Bailey affords an interesting character sketch, by way of introduction to this book, was the son of a clergyman who was a nephew of Charles Reade and head master of Oundle. W. H. V. Reade, to his friends "Billy," was for forty years tutor in philosophy at Keble College, Oxford, and acted as dean and librarian. Scholar, bachelor, a strange mixture between recluse and wit, an independent thinker and a great reader, Reade made his mark in his own way, and this posthumously published book seems to give to those who never knew him, some sense of his living personality. Mr. Reade's wit was almost puckish. Theology, we learn, was invented by philosophers as a protest against religion. "It was Plato who invented persecution," a remark as untrue as it is also understandable. "Every genuine sect of philosophers has been a 'salvation army'." Or again, "the naïve delight sometimes exhibited by friends of religion, when they hear that the solidity of matter is being whittled away by modern physics, as though Materialism would at any rate be less dangerous if only matter could be made decently thin. Possibly rations and war diet will be found to have helped!" Mr. Reade makes one laugh and think together, not a bad combination. A deep knowledge of Greek philosophy, a warm but never indiscriminating Christian faith, an easy style, and illuminating insight, all combine to make one of the most readable and vital books which has appeared in recent years.

Professor Rowley, best known for his outstanding position in Hebrew and Old Testament studies, has here gone into other fields. He has deep and first-hand acquaintance with Eastern, and particularly Chinese, thought, and it is to these that he leads us. Perhaps the title of the book is a little misleading, for it contains three lectures, the first of which deals from the comparative point of view, with the problem of evil in Eastern religions, an able and original study. The second, fully documented, deals with the

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Golden Rule of Christianity and its parallels in Eastern thought. Whether in the negative form that one should not do to others what one does not desire to be done to one's self, or in the positive form of the New Testament, the principle is found in many writers and many quarters. Dr. Rowley indicates the different points of view from which the saying was uttered, and its various applications, very skilfully. The third lecture concerns Mo Ti, or Mo Tzu, for the name is spelt in several ways, the almost unknown sage of China, whose teaching is certainly far superior to that of Confucius and even of Lao-Tzu. The ideals of service, mutual love, pacifism, Mo Ti knew and commended them all. Here we have, somewhere between four and five hundred years before Christ, a man whose philosophy was a protevangelium. He was a younger contemporary of Confucius whose doctrines made more appeal to the nation, as more in line with traditional thought. He was bitterly attacked by Mencius. Gradually his influence waned, but this careful study by Dr. Rowley strengthens the opinion that he deserves to be regarded as the greatest and most high-principled thinker China has ever produced.

Mr. Watts, British by birth and education, is now at the North Western University, United States. The impression one gains from Professor Rowley's book that there is a common creed beneath all religions, notwithstanding the differences they exhibit, is the theme of Mr. Watts's book. In a sense it is equally true that a common philosophy underlies all forms of philosophy. Mr. Watts does not conclude as some superficially do, that therefore there ought to be one religion only. Such a synthetic creation would be doomed at the start. But he rightly believes that the common truth, seen differently by Oriental and Christian faith, is vital to both and its recognition helps each to understand not only the other, but itself. The same things are called by different names in different languages, and it is not otherwise with religious thought. The difference is important but the identity is even more so. That is the essence and value of what Mr. Watts has written.

E. S. WATERHOUSE.

Religion and the Modern Mind. By W. T. Stace. (New York: J. B. Lippincott Co. Pp. 285. Price \$3.75.)

Not many writers on philosophical subjects to-day can compete with Professor Stace in the art of setting forth abstruse matters in a clear and simple style. For this reason his books are always a delight to read, the present work being no exception. The topic of Professor Stace's new book is the impact of science on our outlook upon the world to-day, and he is concerned especially with the way science has undermined belief in God and belief in an objective moral order. After indicating briefly what these beliefs imply, Professor Stace proceeds, in the central and lengthier Part of the book, to a clear and informative account of the rise of modern science and the changes of attitude which this brought about. These historical sections of the work should be very helpful in many ways to students who are beginning to read philosophy and to the layman, although they do not contain much that is new. The summaries of the teaching of outstanding thinkers are skilfully done in the main, and the influence which one thinker had upon others is well brought out. At the same time not everyone will accept Professor Stace's assessment of merit at every point. I should certainly dispute the statement that "Hobbes was not a great philosopher," notwithstanding the addendum that "he was the philosophical mirror of the new science of his time" (p. 109). One wonders also whether the course of naturalism and positivism has been quite as undeviating as the author suggests. It is true that one of the ablest chapters in the book is con-

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cerned with the protests of thinkers like Berkeley, Kant and the romanticists against naturalistic ideas; and one must not overlook the warning of the author himself that he "is not making a value judgment" (p. 205) here. But in spite of this, and the able handling of the work of the thinkers noted, one has misgivings over the description of this "movement of the human spirit" as "an unsuccessful counter-attack against the scientific view of the world" (p. 205). There are already signs of a return to more speculative thinking, and the word metaphysics is finding its way back to an honourable place in our philosophical vocabulary, but this is not accomplished without much indebtedness to the work of earlier speculative thinkers. In particular, the return to positions closely resembling those of the idealists, not always of necessity the best guides to seek, makes one reluctant to agree that idealism "is now almost wholly dead, claiming only a few minor adherents among older men who were brought up in an earlier climate of opinion" (p. 204). But perhaps the point at which one feels most strongly that Professor Stace's picture is inadequate is in his account of one central topic of the book, namely moral objectivity; a word must now be added about this.

Professor Stace appears to think that the case for moral objectivity stands or falls with the notion of a moral government of the world in the sense at least of "a drive towards moral goodness in the world-process" (p. 104). This in turn depends on the view that the concept of value "is intimately bound up with the concept of purpose" (p. 105). We are told that "if anything is in any way valuable, it must presumably be valuable for some purpose. . . . And if we should say, 'Such and such a thing is valuable, but it is not valuable for any purpose, or to anybody, it is *just* valuable,' this would appear to be nonsense" (p. 105). Nonsense it may be, but it is nonsense to which eminent philosophers have subscribed, and we should expect some account to be taken of their arguments and an indication to be given of the part these have played in the development of ethical theory. This is not forthcoming, and one is especially surprised to come upon the sentence: "And even if a clever philosopher could construct a rational theory which made value wholly independent of purpose, it would still nevertheless be true that plain men always connect value with purpose" (p. 106). In addition to calling for more careful analysis than is provided, this sentence cannot but suggest that the task in question has never been essayed by a philosopher of repute. But we know that it has, so far at least as the essence of goodness is concerned. Moore's *Principia Ethica* comes at once to mind. But no mention is made of this book, nor is account taken at any point of the ethical writings of Broad, Ross, Pritchard, Carritt and Ewing, all of them eminent and stout defenders of theories of "moral objectivity" which owe nothing directly to the notion of purpose—except perhaps for some modifications in Dr. Ewing's view. Along with the neglect of this influential school of moralists goes complete disregard of similar thinkers in the past, notably Richard Price and Butler. Surely these are names which deserve mention in an account of the course of modern naturalism and of attempts to arrest it. I should also go further and argue that the importance which ethics has for wider metaphysical questions can only be properly perceived when due regard is paid to the claims of the deontologists. That is, however, too vast an issue to consider now, and I must content myself with an expression of dismay, not unmingled with surprise, at the almost total neglect of an aspect of Professor Stace's subject of which we are put especially in mind by his own handling of his theme.

In the third and final Part of his book Professor Stace offers his own reflections on the situation he has described. He urges firstly that it has been a mistake to suppose that the determinism which a scientific view of the world

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seems to require is not compatible with freedom and responsibility. This is mainly on the ground that actions are modifiable by punishment even if they are determined. But here also one misses a reference to some of the recent discussions of the subject, especially those, like the well-known writings of Broad and C. A. Campbell, which put forward a strong case for views very different from those of Professor Stace himself. As his second main point, the author maintains that, even at the purely secular level, the case for "moral objectivity" can be sustained if presented in terms of the general rules which we ought to observe as conditions of human happiness. The difficulty with which this presents us, however, is that, in the absence of further independent ethical judgments, it is hard to see why a person should not disregard the rules when that conduces to his own happiness. Professor Stace does not deal directly with this question, but he does insist that support for moral objectivity is forthcoming from religion in so far as religious experience provides a mystical sense of the ultimate unity of all-being in which the division between good for self and good for others is dissolved. This suggestion is of special interest coming from one who held at one time that religion "is nothing but a mass of false ideas and superstitions of which the ultimate source is wishful thinking" (p. 213); and the account which is given of mystical experience, based obviously on wide and discerning study, is illuminating. But I much doubt whether religion can reinforce the claim of the moralist unless that claim can be firmly sustained at the ethical level in the first instance. In any case religious experience seems to include much more than a sense of an ultimate unity of all reality. It has a specific content, and however we account for this, it seems to me that it is only in terms of the specific deliverances of the religious consciousness, as these bear on particular moral assurances, that the close relation between morality and religion can be understood. This is also a theme too vast for discussion now, but mention of it may give some indication of the sort of dissatisfaction one feels with Professor Stace's handling of his theme. Much though one welcomes the sympathetic and understanding treatment of mysticism, the reader is also likely to find that the discussion of the more fundamental issues raised in the book is somewhat too scanty and too restricted in scope to meet the expectations raised by the title of the book and the standing of the author.

H. D. LEWIS.

The Philosophy of Aristotle. By D. J. ALLAN. (Oxford University Press, Home University Library, 1952. Pp. 220. Price 6s.)

As a comprehensive introduction to Aristotle's thought, it would be difficult to improve on this book. It is lucid without a hint of condescension or concealment of difficulties, and the author's unerring eye for the essential has made possible a more substantial work of scholarship than its length would suggest. Moreover his thorough knowledge of the modern literature on Aristotle has not prevented him from rethinking the whole subject in his own way, and the resulting freshness and directness of approach add greatly to the attractiveness of the work. The independence of his interpretation is noticeable on almost every page, but perhaps especially in the chapter on ethics. Exposition is supplemented by sufficient criticism and appraisal to make good the author's claim not only "to give an outline of the principal doctrines with reference to the circumstances in which they were formed," but also "to give some evidence that it is still worth while to read Aristotle." His criticism can be severe enough, but is illuminated by the sympathy natural to one who writes from long familiarity both with the contemporary scene and with the

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philosopher's own intentions. Especially enjoyable in this connection is a passage in the chapter on formal logic (p. 130), where instead of simply stating how far Aristotle's work must be regarded as deficient by the standards of modern mathematical logic, Mr. Allan goes over to the attack and points out what, from Aristotle's point of view, is wrong with the methods of the present day.

The order of exposition is exemplary. An account of Aristotle's life and the nature of his writings is followed by an appreciation of the modern genetic approach, after which full weight is naturally given to the importance of Aristotle's relation to Plato and the Academy. A brief statement of contemporary activity in the Academy is successfully extracted from the welter of modern research on the subject, in order to make the point that Aristotle's criticisms are "not exactly aimed at Plato personally," but at "a scholastic version of the theory [of Ideas], devised by his successors, which had become the official doctrine of the school." The account of Aristotle's own philosophy opens with a chapter on the general principles of "physics," so that we are introduced at once to the fundamental conceptions of form and matter, potentiality and act, *kinesis*, cause, nature, etc., which underly every branch of his thought. Logic is left until much later, surely an improvement, for the purposes of an introduction, on those manuals which put it at the beginning.

Provided it is understood that the book is a small masterpiece, it may be worth while to record a different opinion on a few points.

On page 22 it is said that Fragment 12, from the dialogue *On Philosophy*, must have been put by Aristotle into the mouth of Plato. There is no hint of this in Cicero, who quotes it, and I must confess to having read it to pupils as a happy illustration of the contrasting outlook of Aristotle himself. In the *Republic* and *Phaedo* Plato had argued that in this world we are like men living in a firelit cave instead of in the sunshine, or at the bottom of a foggy hole instead of on the true surface of the earth. The "real" world is elsewhere. Far from it, says Aristotle. It is this world which is the real one, and which reflects divine influence clearly and directly. There are none in the position of Plato's cave-dwellers, unless one can imagine a race of men who had in literal fact been born and lived in the bowels of the earth. If such men were brought up as adults into our world, they would at once be convinced, by its beauty and order, of the existence of divine agents. Reality is all around us. *Atque haec quidem Aristoteles*, as Cicero concludes and as I believe. The objection that Aristotle, at least in his maturity, did not believe in a Platonic demiurge is not insuperable, and is outweighed by the difficulty of attributing the sentiment of this passage to Plato.

It seems strange to say (p. 55) that the contrast between potential and actual is not stressed by Aristotle in the *Physics* when he is proving the necessity for an unmoved mover. The proof hinges entirely on the impossibility of the same thing being at the same time and with the same reference in potency and act, and perhaps there is some "need for a detailed examination of his argument," since the impossibility of self-movement is not obvious, yet the point can be simply made when the reader has already been introduced to the conceptions of potentiality and act.

On page 82 Mr. Allan agrees with other critics from Themistius to Sir David Ross that the words "in the *psyche*" in *De anima*, iii, 5, are fatal to Alexander's interpretation of the active reason as something external to man and divine. I have never thought that this was so, if the sentence is considered as a whole. Aristotle says that "just as in the whole of nature" we always find (a) matter and (b) cause, so it must be also "in soul." But in nature we know that the ultimate cause is not itself something *physikon* but outside the natural world

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(i.e. the unmoved mover), and no one would press on Aristotle's words the impossibly restrictive meaning that the cause "in nature as a whole" must be found within the physical world. Yet the words "in soul" are exactly parallel.

On page 121 the view is disputed that there is a separate mover for each distinct planetary sphere, but this seems to be explicitly stated by Aristotle himself in the *Metaphysics*, at 1074 a 14 ff.: "Let this then be the number of the spheres, so that the unmoved substances and principles also may reasonably be assumed to be as many" (Ross's text).

The book includes a useful bibliography, and is well indexed.

W. K. C. GUTHRIE.

Thinking in Opposites. By PAUL ROUBICZEK. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd. 1952. Pp. xii + 244. 21s.)

Paul Roubiczek courageously concerns himself with subject-matter which the most vocal sections of contemporary English thought would consider rather out-moded: "an investigation of the nature of man as revealed by the nature of thinking." The work's major premisses, as well as the outlook and parts of the vocabulary, are overtly Kantian. Nevertheless the author makes these foundations so very much his own that the result is a challenging and thought-provoking book for those who are prepared to take it seriously.

The theme is that human thought provides us with contradictory verdicts as to what is the case: man is at once free and dependent, important and insignificant, progressing and regressing; his life appears both meaningful and meaningless. Such contradictions, though inevitable, cannot be resolved by any intellectual synthesis within a unitary and coherent system, in spite of the apparently natural desire for such a system. The very manner in which man thinks also militates against any such possibility, for careful scrutiny shows that in order to think we are forced to make use of disruptive oppositions: cause and effect, form and content, unity and multiplicity, space and time, and so on. The most fundamental of these oppositions is that found to hold between external and internal reality: (these correspond to the spheres of Kant's Pure and Practical Reason respectively). The two realities are efflorescences of a single "primary reality" (Kant's noumenon), their division being dependent on the fact that "to apprehend them at all we need to think about them in entirely different ways" (p. 23). Nevertheless "every impression and every experience can be included in either of the two realities" (p. 22). This division necessitates the use of three types of opposite: external, internal, and the interconnected ones which refer to both realities. It is by the use of the third of these that the separation between externality and internality, originating in Kant and prolonged by later thought, may be bridged. By the right development of feeling in the direction of the absolute values, opposites and contradictions may ultimately be synthesized; to imagine that purely intellectual unity is possible represents a wrong "intrusion of feeling." It thus becomes possible to advance beyond the consideration of means and ends to principles, and finally to the "finding of a unique form which expresses internal reality distinctly and definitely" (p. 159). In this manner the absolute values—truth, goodness and beauty—are founded: we arrive at "truth, if we discover behind and underneath the surface of reality, a content which shines in its own light; goodness, if we succeed in establishing a principle on which we can absolutely rely and which proves completely adequate to deal with our motives and actions; beauty, if a content has found its perfect form and expression" (p. 160). Further, by the continued application of interconnected opposites thinking is enriched and transformed into a constant activity.

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This bald attempt at a summary can clearly do justice neither to the broad plan nor to the smaller details of a work whose aim is nothing less than the right orientation of human thinking, so as to restore the unity of the person. In tone, the contrasts between the world of positive science and the internal moral realm remind one, on subordinate points at least, of the concerns of certain German theologians of the latter half of the nineteenth century. The accent on the manner in which these external and internal realities are rigidly separated, while at the same time being "two interdependent aspects of one primary reality" (p. 62), with its accompanying opposition to a dualism founded on the two realities (p. 18), and the repeated warnings against the indiscriminate mixing of the two cognate manners of thinking (e.g. p. 144) appear to be redolent of the slant given by Lipsius to Kant's thought. Many of the distinctions are acute and useful, as in the case of those drawn between "aim," "end," and "intention"; it is also interesting to observe a Lockean note in the deduction of the causal category. Encouraging, too, are sentiments such as those of page 170: "Thinking . . . must never destroy the secret and mystery which is at the bottom of all existence." Yet here disappointment follows, for the text continues: "Thinking, in other words, must not transcend the boundaries which are drawn, as we have seen, by its very nature." These boundaries are, of course, the Kantian ones, which in the finality of their mock-humility transform all mysteries into limiting cases of the problematic. Mystery is multi-dimensional, not uniplanar: being inexhaustible it does not require the safeguard of such a univocal enclosure. This being understood, the attitude suggested by the book towards apparently irreconcilable contradictions has much to recommend it. As it stands, however, the danger is that it may lead to a Faustian pride in the cultivation of these for their own sake, since the articulations of the two realities within and across which the opposites confront each other are such that it would be impossible for the dissecting scalpel of thought ever to err; their fearful symmetry is of that thought's own framing.

Many of the points made would, I feel, be improved by clarification. Are the contradictions irreconcilable absolutely, or only *quoad nos*? The "opposites," too, are such a various collection that in spite of the very careful distinctions of Chapter IV one is left with the impression that the concept loses force by the extent of its strained applications. Further, it is not made clear exactly *why* "the knowledge of both realities leads towards the absolute—that is, towards a direct experience of primary reality" (p. 135), for the elucidation of page 164, which reappears almost word for word on page 165, contributes little towards the understanding of this: "We can never hope to grasp primary reality directly, for the division into two realities remains the inescapable condition of all correct thinking. The nearest approach to primary reality is the establishing of the right opposition between external and internal reality."

As in any undertaking of such dimensions, there are questionable assertions of detail, such as one on the nature of mathematics (p. 154), and the twice-repeated generalization on the past relations of Christianity to astronomy (pp. 7 and 92). The book as a whole would have been more interesting than it already is had some of the developments in British philosophy over the past fifty years or so been occasionally taken into consideration: apart from works on the philosophy of religion, there is no approach to these in the main text. This is perhaps accounted for by the fact that the work was begun in Berlin before the coming into power of Hitler.

D. P. HENRY.

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Recent Thought in Focus. By DONALD NICHOLL. (London and New York: Sheed and Ward. 1952. Pp. 250. Price 16s.)

"All I have hoped to do," says Mr. Nicholl at the conclusion of his first chapter on the purpose of this book, "is to make my friends, the postmen, the miners, the undergraduates, etc., feel at home in these remote houses of learning. Once they get over their feelings of awkwardness in the face of learned men they can begin to make their own judgments" (p. 31).

The "remote houses" of learning are inhabited by many families of human knowledge, the three main sections of the book being "Modern Philosophy," under which heading the Empiricist view of things, the Marxian, the Phenomenological movement, Existentialism, Logical Positivism are briefly and clearly outlined and their value estimated; next follows a section on the "Natural Sciences," embracing especially Physics and Biology; lastly "Psychology"—mainly that of the Unconscious and especially that of Jung. All this Mr. Nicholl attempts to make fairly intelligible to the general reader and especially to show him that he has within himself the ability to criticize and evaluate it. Nor are the "experts" neglected, those who have, he implies, so often forgotten elementary principles of method or reason." At least we can check this mad career by asking the expert in everyday language in order to find out where they imagine they are going" (p. 3).

This would seem too great an undertaking for one man to attempt and evidently the outline of some of the views examined are somewhat incomplete. Still, as Mr. Nicholl points out, he is most interested in knowledge that concerns the main vital problems of man and his destiny, with his ultimate value and with religious truths; and within the limits set by the size of the book they are certainly brought, as the title suggests, into focus. Such an effort, if difficult, is certainly commendable. And throughout the book Mr. Nicholl does certainly illustrate the ability of reason, of the reasoning of the ordinary individual to criticize positions too uncritically adopted by the scientist or even by the logician. The short section on Logical Positivism is certainly worth reading.

We feel, however, that he would be asked by some of those he criticizes to make some of his own meanings clearer and to give a more objective justification of his own position—which is, generally speaking, that of Aristotelean-Thomism, though he has an excellent personal grasp of this, and so is enabled to see much good in other systems. Many of his remarks, and sometimes his terminology, will certainly be more intelligible to Catholics than to the general reader he envisages. One particular point is perhaps worth raising. The "expert," even in Philosophy, may think it legitimate to ask that one who criticizes him in the light of his "common sense" should be prepared to find a certain effort necessary to follow him. Does not Philosophy itself necessitate a purification and development of concepts to which the "inexpert" may not have attained? Any Philosophy worthy of the name has a history.

R. MOLONEY.

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CORRESPONDENCE

DEFINITION OF THE WORD "FACT"

To the Editor of *Philosophy*

DEAR SIR,

Whilst approving the principle that words of universal use should have a clear and precise meaning as suggested by Mr. G. Burniston Brown in the report of his address printed in the *Journal* for April, 1953, I cannot approve his definition of the word "fact" (i.e. propositions which are verifiable). It is my opinion that "fact" should be confined to the description of occurrences taking place "now."

If we accept Mr. Brown's assertion that past and future occurrences are hypotheses it is obvious that only occurrences immediately observable can be considered as facts; in which case propositions are statements inferred from facts.

The proposition "Napoleon died at St. Helena" is hypothetical and is a particular instance of the general inference contained in the proposition "All men are mortal." To draw a comparison therefore between a particular statement such as "Napoleon died at St. Helena" with a general inference such as "Sodium chloride melts at 801° C" is quite wrong. To be logical it is necessary to compare the historical statement with a particular scientific experiment which requires to be dated, and once such a scientific experiment has taken place it becomes historical and hypothetical equally with all other past occurrences.

The proposition "All men are mortal" cannot be verified: neither can the propositions of science. What is verified are particular instances which serve to confirm our belief in the general inference. If you deny the identity and validity of historical statements you deny the same of each and every scientific observation or experiment.

Yours faithfully,

A. D. MACKAY.

3 Parkhill Road, Glasgow, S.1.

June 4, 1953.

CORRESPONDENCE

REPLY TO MR. MACKAY

To the Editor of *Philosophy*

DEAR SIR,

I do not assert that "past and future occurrences are hypotheses," but that assertions in past and future tense are hypothetical, and that only assertions in the present tense can be verifiable and therefore suitable to be called facts.

"Sodium chloride melts at 801° C" means that if you melt a piece of common salt (i.e. a piece of matter which has the properties defined to be those of sodium chloride) you find the melting point to be 801° C. This can be verified, and applies "now" as Mr. MacKay says. Verification, of course, will require a time interval, but the uniformity of Nature allows the assertion to be maintained in spite of practical difficulties.

After it has been verified with many different samples, and without any exception, we may venture: "All sodium chloride melts at 801° C," but this, of course, is a generalization and cannot be verified. We may likewise venture: "Sodium chloride will melt at 801° C (in the future)," but this is a hypothesis and, also, is not verifiable now.

"All men are mortal" only appears to be a case of the present tense, though a linguistic peculiarity. It should be: "All men will die," and is clearly in future tense and hypothetical.

Mr. MacKay says: "It is obvious that only occurrences immediately observable can be considered as facts." But what occurs? What does the observer *know* except his own events of consciousness? I have argued that it would be unsatisfactory to call these facts, and still maintain that the word *fact* should be reserved for what is most reliable in *common* knowledge, viz., propositions that can be verified.

June 14, 1953.

G. BURNISTON BROWN.

To the Editor of *Philosophy*

Re *Philosophy*, vol. xxviii, p. 156, 1953.

DEAR SIR,

Dr. Burniston Brown states in his paper "Is the Definition of the Word *Fact* the first Problem of Philosophy?" that we are conscious of "changes in the brain itself which we call 'thoughts' or 'ideas.'" This is surely inaccurate. We infer from the available natural scientific evidence that when we are aware of a bright light certain electro-physical changes occur in the cells of the cerebral cortex and their connections, but no one has, so far as I know, shown that we are in any sense conscious of our cerebral cortex. Even when patients complain of headaches they do not tell us they are aware of anything more than a pain "in the head." The brain surface itself is apparently insensitive to painful stimulation. Similarly, as Dr. Brown himself points out, our retina cannot "know" a flash of light in the ordinary sense of the word; only I myself can know that I have seen a lightning flash. *Pace* Professor Ryle, the available clinical evidence as well as the experience of individuals is that there is an "I" and a "Thou," and these words are meaningful. The available evidence about men and women and their experiences can only be satisfactorily accounted for in terms of "I's" and "Thou's."

Dr. Brown is surely wrong again when he says "we become conscious of . . . the interaction of the stimulus with activity already present." We infer that this statement describes what has happened when we become aware of a lightning flash; we infer that the mechanism involved in vision has been brought into play, no more. To repeat, none of what he says can have any meaning unless his "I" is something more than a symbol.

Physiology and Biochemistry Department
University College, Dundee.

A. T. MACQUEEN.

REPLY TO MR. MACQUEEN

To the Editor of *Philosophy*

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Macqueen has failed to notice that the quotations he makes are from a paragraph which commences: "Let us suppose that the latest way of regarding the brain . . . is correct." My aim was to show that certain experimental results lead to a theory which explains our well-known experience that, usually, stimuli and their interpretation are simultaneous within the limits of conscious discrimination. There was no suggestion that: "we are in any sense conscious of our cerebral cortex." As I said: "All we ever know are the events of our own consciousness."

As regards the symbol "I": if it is a symbol, then it has a referent, but it is very difficult to say what this is. I have made a suggestion in my address. Presumably, for a solipsist, "I" would symbolize the sum total of events of consciousness at any instant. For us, however, there is an external world which is the cause of many of our events of consciousness, and not symbolized by "I." But if the stimuli from the external world were removed, and those due to our bodies as well, would there be anything left for "I" to symbolize?

June 1953

G. BURNISTON BROWN.

INSTITUTE NOTES

The following course of six lectures, to be given by A. C. Ewing, M.A., Litt.D. (University of Cambridge), has been arranged for the Michaelmas Term, 1953, at 14 Gordon Square, W.C.1, at 5.30 p.m.:—

- October 16th. "Knowledge."
- October 23rd. "Matter."
- October 30th. "Mind."
- November 6th. "Causality and Freedom."
- November 13th. "Good and Evil."
- November 20th. "God."

This course will be followed by two further lectures:—

- November 27th. "Ethics." S. E. Toulmin, M.A. (University of Oxford).
- December 4th. "Moral Responsibility." C. H. Whiteley, M.A. (University of Birmingham).

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(Suggested)

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NOTICES

Bound volumes of PHILOSOPHY for the years 1926–1937, belonging to the late Mr. George N. M. Tyrrell, are available. Enquiries should be addressed to: Miss G. M. Johnson, "Prospect," Blandford Road, Reigate, Surrey.

KANTSTUDIEN

The periodical *Kantstudien* will resume regular publication early next year under the editorship of Professor Gottfried Martin of the University of Mainz. The first number will take the form of a special memorial volume to mark the 150th anniversary of Kant's death; contributors include L. W. Beck, Jean Hyppolite, R. Kroner, H. J. Paton, G. Ryle and H. J. de Vleeschauwer. The yearly subscription price is 28 DM; after 1954 each volume will normally appear in four separate parts. Enquiries should be made to the publishers, Kölner Universitätsverlag, Köln-Weidenpesch, Neusserstrasse 624, or to Dr. I. Heidemann, Köln-Braunsfeld, Hültzstrasse 32, Germany.

